



POROS The Great

At the bank of the river Hydaspes (Jehlum) when the intensity of war between Poros and Alexander reached a high pitch, Alexander addressed Poros the great as follows.

"O! nobel man:

Our two hosts have been shattered by the fight. The wild beasts batten on the brains of men, the horses' hoofs are trampling on their bones, now both of us are heroes, brave and young. Both Paladins of eloquence and brain, why then slaughter be the soldiers' lot or bare survival after combating."

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POROS The Great By: Buddha Prakash

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Preface: **AITZAZ AHSAN**

A warrior of Punjab who fought with Alexander on the bank of river Hydaspes (Jhelum) in 327 B.C.





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Preface : Aitzaz Ahsan

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GAUTAM NOTE

Legends and Heros of a particular area/Nation usually depict the flight of civilization of the area / nation. Poros is one of the legends of ancient Punjab. Numerous unknown poets remembered him in their creations. Normally, Poros stands for pride and bravery of Punjab.

The book "Poros the great" was first published by Punjabi University Patiala with the name of "History of Poros". Before reprinting this book in Pakistan, unlike our publishing traditions, we wrote a letter to Punjabi University Patiala for giving permission of printing Pakistani edition of this valuable account of history. But we could not get any reply. So we requested our friend Mr. Irfan Malik who was visiting India at the Annual Book Fair in Dehli. He met the relevant authorities at the stall of Punjabi University and requested permission for Pakistani edition.

The book, as you will read it, is a valued research document but unfortunately published in India without Index. The document of such historical importance must not be treated like that. So we made index of this book.

We requested our Designer Mr. Riaz to make a Sketch of Poros. Unfortunately we have not sufficient material in this regard. Ain-ul-Haq Freed Koti gave us some Greek paintings but as the Europeans usually do, the face of Poros looked like an Aryan or Greek Prince. But Mr. Riaz again tried his best and drew the present Sketch. Now it is upto the students of history of Punjab that they decide whether it represents Poros or not.

As we got this document from Mr. Ahmad Saleem's research centre, GRIP (Gohar Research Institute of Pakistan) so it is essential to thank him for giving this book to us.

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PREFACE TO THIS EDITION

Raja Poros is that mythical character of the history of the Indus region, particularly the Punjab, who emerges from the mists of ancient history in varying colours. Most often he is referred to as the Indian king who unsuccessfully resisted a great and benevolent conqueror from the civilized world. He is seen as a prince who could not lead his armies with any wise strategy. He is believed to have been an incompetent tactician. Even the alleged stampede by his elephants has been incorporated in a derisive idiom. Poros, however, is attributed valour. In the accounts by Greek chroniclers even this concession is made only to enhance the stature of the Macedonian invader.

By contrast there appear very few disagreements with the opinion that Poros' adversary was a great and magnanimous conqueror. Alexander is always "the Great", and the conqueror of the world. There is many a myth that extols his "contributions" to the several distant lands that he brought under his sway. He is the benefactor who "Hellenised" the known world and left behind many social practices that "civilized" contemporary barbarians. Poros' people are among the many such retarded societies to be pulled up to the level of the glorious Greeks by the armies of Macedonia. Many historians presume that he was just another one of Alexander's trophies.

It is a sad commentary upon these one-sided accounts of this chapter of history that these have induced the adoption of the name "Sikandar" as a socially accepted name in this region, while none choose to name their sons "Poros", despite the fact that both are obviously, and equally, pre-Islamic names!

In many respects the renowned scholar Professor Buddha Prakash has put the record straight. And he has done so with objectivity and the facility of immense scholarship. He has the mastery of all the sources of information of the Battle of Jhelum. He has not become a partisan, even though he has demolished many an accepted social myth about the two protagonists. Other questions may still, of course, be raised. How many times have conquerors, after gory and frenzied battles, "gifted" the kingdom they have won to the very rivals that they have fought and defeated?" Why was Alexander's heart admittedly "weary", and what made him reckon with "the fatigue whereby we are all perishing"? And why did the series of conquests of the Great Conqueror peter out after this decisive battle? Wherefore did he turn back, and commence his return journey [though downstream along the Indus], after this confrontation? The answers may indeed suggest that the result of the Battle of Jhelum was not Alexander's victory, but his defeat. How else could Poros have remained the king of his domains after the battle. Surely not on account of a "gift" from his own adversary. To answer these questions, however, only a person with the scholarship of the level of Professor Buddha Prakash would be competent.

Gautam Publishers, in the meanwhile, need to be congratulated for having obtained the rights to reprint "Poros" in Pakistan. The book itself is a major contribution to the history of this region. It throws light upon a little-known, and even less understood, part of our history. It raises the level of our comprehension of ourselves. And it restores to a justified pre-eminence the status of Raja Poros as one of the valiant and glorious heroes of the entire Indus region. I consider it a privilege to have been asked to contribute these few words to this volume.

Senator Aitzaz Ahsan

June 1994
Lahore

I

THE FAMILY OF POROS

The name of Poros or Porus is equated with Paurava of Paurāṇika dynastic lists. However, Bohlen has suggested that this name corresponds to Pauruṣa. In this connection, it is interesting to note that in the *Mahābhārata*, at several places, Pauruṣa is given as a variant of Paurava. It is, thus, clear that ancient genealogists often confused Pauruṣa with Paurava obviously because both these names represented the famous stock of Puru which played an important role in Indian historical legends.

In Vedic literature, we come across the name of the tribe of the Purus. The word *puru* is of Indo-Iranian origin and connotes the idea of abundance. It occurs in the *Avesta* as *pouru* and in the inscriptions of the Achaemenian emperors as *paru* in this sense. In a passage of the *Ṛgveda* (I, 36, 1), Sāyaṇa interprets the expression *puru* to mean 'many' and Griffith follows him in his translation : "of many families, who duly serve the Gods, yea, him, whom others also praise."

Yāska interprets *puru* as 'man'. However, in Vedic hyms, we find it as the name of a tribe with Purukutsa as its leader. The Purāṇas and the *Mahābhārata* give a mythical genealogy of the Purus. They trace their ancestor Puru from Dakṣa and Aditi, the primeval parents, Vivasvān Manu and Ilā, Pururavas, Āyu, Nahuṣa and Yayāti. The last mentioned king had two queens, Devayānī and Śarmiṣṭhā, by whom he begot Yadu and Turvasu, and Druhyu, Anu and Puru respectively. Puru was the progenitor of the Pauravas. In the famous Battle of Ten Kings, referred to in the *Ṛgveda*, the Purus, led by Purukutsa, are said to have formed a confederacy with the Yadu-Turvaśas, Bhṛgus, Druhyus, Pakthas, Bhalāṇas, Alinas, Śivas, Viṣāṇins and Anus against the Tṛtsu-Bharata King Sudās. The confederate forces encamped on the Ravi while the Bharata King advanced from the Sarasvatī region. It was, perhaps, the rainy season, when

the rivers were in spate and difficult to cross. But, somehow, under the energetic guidance of Vasiṣṭha, the Bharata King Sudās succeeded in negotiating them. The confederates quickly tried to pounce on Sudās and attempted to make the Ravi fordable by digging channels and diverting the water through them. But this device fell through, as the swollen current of the river inundated their own camp and spread destruction in it. This turned the difficulty of Sudās into an opportunity. He rushed to demolish all the strong places and wrest the seven castles of his adversaries. Purukutsa, the leader of the ten confederate tribes, was defeated and reduced to great straits. Perhaps, he was taken captive. In that dark hour, his wife Purukutsānī gave birth to a son Trasadasyu who retrieved the disaster of his family.

On coming of age, Trasadasyu organized the broken forces of his clan and succeeded in rehabilitating the lost glory and prosperity of the Purus. Incidentally, a crisis overtook the realm of Sudās at that time. His successors cast the son of their priest Vasiṣṭha, named Śakti, into the fire. This enraged and antagonized the Vasiṣṭhas who determined to avenge themselves on the Bharatas. Taking advantage of this situation, Trasadasyu advanced on the Sarasvatī, shattering and capturing the forts in the way and trampling under foot the kingdom of the Bharatas. As a result, the Purus were preponderant over the whole of the Panjab up to the Sarasvatī and the Yamunā and the Bharatas mixed and merged with them to form the composite people called Puru-Bharatas.

Trasadasyu's son, Hiraṇin, and his other descendants, Tṛkṣi, Tryaruṇa and Kuruśravaṇa, ranked as notable kings, but new tribal groups, like the Pañcālas and the Kurus, appeared on the scene and made matters difficult for the Puru-Bharatas. A tradition, recorded in the *Mahābhārata*, relates how the Pañcālas defeated the Paurava King Samvaraṇa and forced him to retreat with his family and attendants to the banks of the Sindhu, where he made Vasiṣṭha his purohita and, under his guidance, set out to recover his kingdom.

According to Paurāṇika tradition, Samvaraṇa had by his queen Tapatī a son, named Kuru, who extended his sway up to

Prayāga, modern Allahabad, in the east and performed sacrifices there. This legend enshrines the alliance and merger of the Purus with the Kurus, a people not mentioned as such in the *Ṛgveda*. Though there are references to Kaurayāṇa and Kuruśravaṇa in the hymns, showing that their seers were familiar with the name of Kuru, the people called Kurus and the region of Kurukṣetra are not mentioned in them. This shows that the Kurus did not play an important role at the time when these hymns were given their present form. As a matter of fact, the Kurus were an Iranian people having their homeland beyond the Himalayas somewhere in the Tarim Valley, known in Indian literature as Uttarakuru, and, migrating from there towards the West, spread up to Iran and Anatolia in the West and moved into the Punjab and the Gangetic Valley in the South. In the North-West, they became one with the Purus which lies at the basis of the tradition that Kuru was the son of the Paurava King Samvaraṇa noted above.

The Puru-Kurus dominated the North-West, the Panjab and U.P. up to Allahabad. According to the collated text of the Purāṇas, Kuru had three sons, Parikṣita, Janhu and Sudhanvan. The former was a powerful ruler and had Janamejaya as his son. Under Parikṣita and Janamejaya the star of the Kurus shone bright and the glory of Kurukṣetra rose to great height. The later Vedic texts wax eloquent over the might and prosperity of these kings. It is said in the *Atharvaveda* (XX, 127, 7–10) that during the reign of Parikṣita there was so much abundance of honey and milk that a guest or visitor had difficulty in getting water wherever he stayed. His son Janamejaya was a famous conqueror and sacrificer and is credited with the performance of an Aśvamedha. Janamejaya's sons, Śrutasena, Ugrasena and Bhīmasena, are mentioned, but nothing further is said about them. The accounts then pass on to Janhu's son Suratha and his descendants who continued the main Paurava line. As for the line of Sudhanvan, it bifurcated into the Chedi and Magadha branches.

Pratipa is said to have revived the power of the main Paurava line which had undergone an eclipse in the meantime.

He had three sons Devāpī, Bālhīka and Śantanu. The eldest was a leper and the second resigned in favour of the youngest, Śantanu, who had a son Bhīṣma by Gaṅgā and two sons Chitrāṅgada and Vichitravīrya by Satyavatī. Bhīṣma remained a celibate and renounced the throne in favour of his consanguine brothers. Chitrāṅgada died while fighting with the Gandharvas and Vichitravīrya passed away issueless. Vyāsa begot two sons Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu on the queens of Vichitravīrya whose descendants are called Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas. According to tradition, their conflict precipitated the Great War of Mahābhārata which spelled the decline and downfall of the Puru-Kurus.

According to the Great Epic, the tribes and clans of the Panjab sided with the Kauravas in the Great War. Jayadratha of Sindhu-Sauvīra, Śakuni of Gandhāra, Sudakṣiṇa, King of the Kāmbojas, Suśarmā of Trigarta, Śalya of the Madras, Śritāyu of the Ambaṣṭhas and the chiefs of the Kekayas, Sibis, Vālhīkas, Kṣudrakas and Mālavas were on the Kaurava side. Only Abhisāra (Punch-Rajori) favoured the other party. This shows that the Kauravas had a firm hold on the Panjab and the North-West and counted on the assistance and co-operation of its peoples and tribes. The Pāṇḍavas, whoever they were, were foreign to the Panjab and were stoutly resisted by her peoples.

The outcome of the Great Battle was the disaster and débâcle of the Kauravas. Their empire broke to pieces and the Panjab and the North-West were plunged in utter confusion and anarchy. The Pāṇḍava King Parīkṣita is said to have been killed by the Nāga King Takṣaka following which his son Janamejaya performed a serpent-sacrifice which, perhaps, symbolizes his measures against the Nāga menace. Janamejaya is also said to have held court at Taxila, but a crisis at the heart of the kingdom in the Gangetic Valley dislocated his successors from Hastināpura and forced them to migrate towards Kauśāmbī in the east. Thereafter, the Purāṇas say very little about the Panjab and the North-West and concentrate mainly on eastern dynasties, evidently, because it was difficult to see through the confusion prevailing there.

Though the Purāṇas vouchsafe no light on the affairs of the Panjab, Buddhist texts refer to a powerful state of Gandhāra ruled over by the energetic king Pukkusāti in the North-West in the sixth century B.C. This king had a friendly relation with King Bimbisāra of Magadha, planned a campaign against King Pradyota of Avanti and possibly had intimate contacts, first peaceful and then hostile, with the Achaemenian conqueror Cyrus the Great. It appears that he expanded his kingdom towards the Panjab up to the Ravi and Multan. A Jātaka story states that Kaśmīra formed part of the Gandhāra kingdom, the Greek writer Strabo mentions a tribe called Gandāris, living between the Chenab and the Ravi, and Hecataeus of Miletus refers to Kaspapyros or Kaśyapapura, modern Multan, as a city belonging to Gandhāra. It was obviously at that time that Taxila, the capital of Gandhāra, rose as a great centre of learning and commerce.

The rapid rise of the Achaemenians in Iran arrested the growth of Gandhāra and ultimately put an end to her independence. Sometime between 520 and 515 B.C., Darius the Great (522-486 B.C.) conquered Gandhāra and Sind. Xerxes also maintained his hold over this region, but, from the time of Artaxerxes, the decline of the Achaemenians started and many provinces of their empire, including, perhaps, Gandhāra and Sind, threw off their yoke. The important point to note is that at the time of Alexander's invasion there was hardly any trace of Achaemenian rule in the North-West. It appears that sometime in that period the Pauravas again asserted themselves and carved out a kingdom between the Jhelum and the Chenab.

It is noteworthy that the *Mahābhārata* refers to the tribe of the Pauravas as an important people of the North. One of their clans was known as Pauraka, the members of which are said to have brought pressents for Yudhiṣṭhira on the occasion of his Rājasūya ceremony according to the Sabhāparvan of the *Mahābhārata* (II, 48, 13). There, they are bracketed with the Kāśmīras, Kundamānas, Hanskāyanas, Śibis, Traigartas, Yaudheyas, Madras and Kekayas. Moticandra has suggested that their country may be identified with the Yasin country in

the Chitral Agency as the people of both Yasin and Chitral are sometimes called by their eastern neighbours Pore and their country Poriaki. In the *Mahābhārta* (V, 50, 2081) the Pauravakas are said to have joined the army of Yudhisthira, but the main body of the Pauravas are stated to have sided with Duryodhana and fought valiantly for him, as we shall see later. Besides the *Mahābhārata*, the *Bṛhatsaṁhitā* of Varāhamihira (IV, 26-7) associates the Pauravas with the peoples of Taxila and Puṣkalāvatī and locates them in the vicinity of the Mālavas and Madrakas. Thus, it is clear that, inspite of political changes and dynastic vicissitudes, the Pauravas continued to live in the North-West and western Panjab. Right from the time of the mythical Pururavas, who is said to have lived with his beautiful wife Urvasī in Nandana, identified by Sir Aurel Stein with the mountainous territory of that name, situated right above a difficult path in the eastern part of the Salt Range on the bank of the Jhelum, to that of Poros, who ruled near that very region and offered a stiff resistance to Alexander the Great at the time of his invasion of India, the Pauruvas seem to have had an intimate and continuous association with the region watered by the river Jhelum. In the fourth century B.C. fortune favoured their rise once again in that territory under Poros.

II

PANJAB ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF POROS

We have seen how the fall of the Kurus opened the floodgates for the infiltration of many exotic elements in the Panjab. The polyandrous sati-practising people, remembered under the designation of the Pandavas, represented some Iranian nomadic elements. In their wake many outlandish tribes like Jartas, modern Jats, Abhiras, modern Ahirs, Balhikas, modern Bahls, Behls and Wahis, and many other exotic warrior clans, whose strange armours, bows and banners, unfamiliar trappings, vehicles and local costumes, ornaments and deportment are noticed in the *Udyogaparvan* of the *Mahābhārata* (IV, 8, 3-4), entered into the Panjab. During the rule of the Achaemenids, some Persian and Ionian peoples settled there. Taxila had a colony of the Persians, who exposed their dead, and Begram and Nysa were Greek settlements. In eastern Gandhara, the Greek Sophytes and his people had settled at the instance of the Achaemenids. They had their seat of power between the Indus and the Chenab, but, later, had to migrate to the east and the south and settle in the vicinity of the Kathaians or the Kathas between the Ravi and the Beas in eastern Panjab. Among them marriages were contracted by looks rather than consideration of dowry and only healthy children were allowed to live. Strabo writes that, when a boy was two months old, he was examined by public physicians and allowed to live only if he conformed to the acknowledged standards of health and physique. In case he had deformed or defective limbs or was sickly or weak, the physicians recommended his exposure. The vogue of these eugenic principles in the ordering of society recalls the analogous institution of the Spartans in Greece. The fact that we find these institutions and practices in the Panjab in the fourth century shows how far the Greek way of life had travelled in the fourth century B.C.

As a result of the immigration of foreign peoples and the resurgence of many indigenous tribes, who lived by the profession of arms and took to robbery, plunder and fighting, the social set-up of the Panjab underwent a radical transformation. The *Mahābhārata* states that the mercenary fighting classes of the Panjab had different types of organisation like *pūga*, *vrāta*, *kula*, *gaṇa*, *śreṇi* and *grāma*. The *pūgas* belonged to a primitive form of tribal organisation, while the *vrātas* were bands of predatory people, who lived by violence and were distinguished by red and black robes, like the Red and Black Kafirs of the Hindukush. A number of *vrātas* formed a *kula* dominated by the *rājanyavṛddhas* or elders of the bands, and many *kulas* made a *saṁgha* in which the elders ranged themselves into various groups and parties called *dvandva*, *varga*, *pakṣa*, *gṛhya etc*. The *gaṇas* and *śreṇis* represented the clans, agglomerations and communities of soldiers, living as separate groups, and the grāmas stood for the bodies of tribal groups tracing their descent from common ancestors and led by hereditary chiefs called the grāmaṇeyas. Among these groups, tribes and associations the military class was in the ascendant and there was hardly any distinction between the warriors and priests. The *Mahābhārata* (Karṇaparvan, 45, 40) refers to them as *rājayājaka* and Pāṇini (II, 2, 9) calls them *kṣatriyayājaka*. In fact, they were free from the rigidity of castes and their structure admitted of considerable social mobility as can be gathered from the remark of the *Mahābhārata* (VIII, 45, 6-7) that among them a brāhmṇa could become barber and vice-versa. Some of these people even drank the milk and ate the flesh of pigs, cocks, cows, donkeys, camels and sheep. Their consumption of onion and garlic and wine and rum was an anathema to the orthodox people. Their predatory habits, latitudarian spirit, groupist outlook, anti-monarchist tendency and averseness to political stability and centralized government earned them the epithet of *arāṣṭraka*, Prākṛit *āraṭṭa*, modern *aroḍā*, meaning stateless, and *choragaṇa* meaning gangs of robbers. Following these expressions, Arrian called them 'independent', and Justin, 'thieves'.

Out of the welter of warrior clans, tribal groups and

predatory associations a strong, populous and urbanized society was emerging under the Achaemenids. Strabo states that, between the Jhelum and the Beas, there were as many as 500 cities. Pāṇini gives the names of about 750 towns some of which were tribal-cum-territorial units called Janapadas. Speaking of the cities in the kingdom of Glaukanikoi between the upper courses of the Jhelum, the Chenab and the Ravi, Arrian states that the smallest of them contained not fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, while many contained upwards of 10,000. With the break-up of Achaemenid rule, the growing people of the Panjab passed through a bout of tribulation and instability resulting in a new pattern of socio-political configuration. One generation before Alexander, the Sanskrit grammarian Pāṇini, who came from the village Śalātura near Und on the Indus, caught a glimpse of the flickering kaleidoscope of the Panjab which can be understood as follows :

The highlanders of the North-West, prominent among whom were the Āśvāyanas of the Kunar Valley and the Āśvakāyanas of the Swat Valley, with their strongholds of Maśakāvatī and Varaṇā, were independent tribal groups defying political overlordship. The Kabul-Indus region was full of tribal units like *Aśani*, modern Shinwari, *Kārṣāpaṇa*, modern Kārshbun, *Āprīta*, modern Afridis, *Madhumant*, modern Mohmands, *Hṛdagolīya*, the people of modern Hadda, *Rohitagirīya*, the modern Rohs or Afghans. These people lived by fighting and plunder like the Qabailis of the modern times. Being highlanders, they are called *parvatīya āyudhajīvins*. Interspersed with them were also pockets of Persians, remembered as *Parśu* by Pāṇini, and Greeks, like those of Nysa or the *Naiśa* Janapada mentioned by Patañjali. The kingdom of Gandhāra was divided into two parts with their capitals at Puṣkalāvatī, modern Pakholi near Charsadda, and Takṣaśilā, modern Taxila in the Rawalpindi district. They were ruled over by the Hāstināyanas and Āmbhas respectively, represented by Astes and Ombhis at the time of Alexander's invasion.

South of Gandhāra up to the Sutlej sprawled the plains called Vāhika peopled by another group of *āyudhajīvī saṁghas*

or clans and tribes of warriors of various character and composition. Some of them were conterminous with caste groups, and, others corresponded to tribe agglomerations. Among the warrior groups of the Brāhmaṇas, we hear of Gopālava, and, among those of the Kṣatriyas, we find the Rājanyas. *The Mahābhārata* speaks of Brāhmaṇa warriors called *Vāṭadhāna*, and Greek writers refer to a colony of Brāhmaṇa soldiers at Atari twenty miles to the west-south-west of Tulamba. Pāṇini refers to the *āyudhajīvī saṁgha* of the Rājanyas who may be located near Hoshiarpur where their coins have been found. Some guilds of merchants also practised the profession of arms and came to be known as *vārtāśastropajīvins*. Likewise, the groups of Śūdras took to fighting as a business like other communities. Pāṇini refers to Śaudrāyaṇa and Patañjali to Abrāhmaṇaka janapada which obviously stands for some such group as the Sodrai who offered resistance to Alexander in Sind. It appears that almost all the caste groups organised themselves in the form of military associations in the disturbed conditions lasting from the breakdown of the Kuru kingdom to the disintegration of the Achaemenid empire. These groups retained their old caste names, but, for purposes of defence as well as livelihood, formed colonies and cantons of soldiers on the pattern of numerous other foreign and native clans who lived mainly by fighting and plunder. Thus, the military profession was the common factor in the social set-up of the Panjab ensuring the growth of mobility and pushing up the trend of equality among the numerous and various clans, groups and associations of peoples living there. The term *āyudhajīvī saṁgha*, being a common and collective designation of the people of the Panjab, breathes this spirit of social mobility leading to the drive for equality.

Among the *āyudhajīvī saṁghas* or military communities of the Vāhika country, Pāṇini mentions a large number of tribal units like the *Vṛka*, modern Virks, *Baijavāpi*, modern Bajwas, *Bālhīka*, modern Behls and Bahls, *Vārtteya*, modern Batras, *Dhārtteya*, modern Dattas etc. But the most important among them were the *Kṣudrakas* and *Mālavas*. These

people were the descendants of the ancient Madras who were once the dominant people of the Panjab. Pāṇini (VII, 3, 13 ; IV, 2, 108) says that the Madras were divided into two groups, Aparamadra, inhabiting the Gujrat district between the Jhelum and the Chenab, and Pūrvamadra, settled in the Gujranwala and Sialkot Districts between the Chenab and the Ravi. Their capital Śākala, situated on the bank of the Āpagā, is the same as modern Sialkot lying along the Ayek which rises in the outer range of hills and is finally lost about two miles to the east of Shorkot in the Jhang district. In course of time, the rural and rustic sections among them came to be known as *Malla*, since in the Prākrit language *dr* becomes *ll*. Similarly, a part of one of their branches, called *Bhadra*, began to be designated as *Bhalla*, modern *Bhalla*. The Madras also united with the Śālvas or Sālvas, living from the Kangra Valley to the Yamunā, as is clear from the legend of the marriage of the Madra princess Mālavī with ihe Sālva prince Satyavān recorded in the *Mahābhārata*. From their union the Mālavas came into being. It seems that, being a junior branch of the Madras or Mallas, they were known as *Kṣudraka-mālava* or junior Mālavas. But later they branched in two parts called *Kṣudrakas* and *Mālavas* respectively. According to the *Mahābhārata*, they lived to the east of the region, called Mādhyamika, modern Manjha between the Ravi and the Beas, that is to say, occupied the territory from the entrance of the Kangra Valley at Gurdaspur in the north to the cis-Sutlej states now called Malwa. Even today the region between the Ghaggar and the Sutlej is known as Malwa and its people are called Malvais. But sometime in the fourth century, under the pressure of the people from the North, the Mālavas and their kinsmen, the Kṣudrakas, became concentrated in South Panjab. At the time of Alexander's invasion, the Mālavas occupied the southern part of the doab of the Chenab and the Ravi and extended to the confluence of the Chenab and the Indus, and the Kṣudrakas lived to the east of them between the Ravi and the Sutlej in the region of Bahawalpur and may well have extended as far as the junction of the Sutlej with the Indus and the neighbourhood of

Ucch. Other important peoples of the Panjab in that period were the Sibis, modern Chibs, Vasātis, modern Sobtis, Ambaṣṭhas, Yaudheyas *etc.* In the Rohtak-Agroha region lived the Rohītakas, a people descended from the Rohas or Lohas, who gave the name Roh to Afghanistan and seem to have migrated from there to their present habitât in Hariyāṇā, and the Āgreyas, the ancestors of the modern Agrawālas, and other peoples.

Besides the Vāhika region, Pāṇini mentions a division called *Trigartaṣaṣṭha* comprising the six military communities of Kauṇḍoparatha, Dāṇḍaki, Krauṣṭaki, Jālamāni, Brāhmagupta and Jānaki. The Mahābhārata refers to the Saṁśaptakas of Trigarta, which shows that they marched to battle with the vow of 'do or die.' Trigarta means the country watered by three rivers, Sutlej, Beas and Ravi. It comprised the territory from Jullundur to the hilly country lying between the Ravi and the frontiers of Mandi and Suket to the south of the Dhaoladhar mountain and extended northwards to include the Kullu Valley.

The aforsaid picture of the Panjab was changing in the interlude between the fall of the Achaemenids and the advent of the Macedonians. The historians of Alexander's campaigns give us some glimpses into this process of socio-political change. They state that the hilly country north of the Kabul river was peopled by the sturdy highlanders of Indo-Iranian stock called Aspasians and Assakenoi, corresponding to Āśvāyanas and Āśvakāyanas, probably the tribes of the Kāmbojas, later known as Kambohs, with their strongholds in the mountain-fastnesses like Massaga, Bajaur and Aornos. Western Gandhāra was split up into many principalities ruled over by autonomous chiefs like Kophaios (Kubheśa), Assagetes (Aśvajit) and Astes (Hastin). Eastern Gandhāra had come under the rule of Ombhis (Āmbhī) of the Ambha clan. Kashmir, especially Punch-Rajori, was under an independent king called Abhisares (Abhisāreśa). Close by, to the north-of the Jhelum, were the Glausai (Glaucukāyanas) in the region of Bhimber and Bajaur. To the east of the Jhelum up to the Chenab, lay the realm of Poros, and, between the Chenab and the Ravi,

ruled his nephew called the younger Poros. To the east of the Ravi up to the Beas, lived the Kathaians (*Kaṭhas*) and the people of Sophytes (*Saubha*) who had migrated from the region along the Jhelum. Thereafter came the dominion of a king Phegelas or Phegeus or Bhagala mentioned by Pāṇini. The country to the east of the Beas was exceedingly fertile and the inhabitants were good agriculturists, brave in war, and living under an excellent system of internal government run by the aristocracy who exercised their authority with justice and moderation. Their elephant corps was stronger than that of other people. Here obviously there is a reference to the Mālavas, Yaudheyas *etc.* In South Panjab lived the Malloi (*Mālavas*), Oxadrai (*Kṣudrakas*), Siboi (*Śibis*), Agalassians or Argesinae (*Āgreyas*), Ossadioi (*Vasātis*), Xathroi (*Kṣatragaṇa*) and other warlike tribes, having oligarchical organisations, which had probably moved southwards under the pressures from the north.

It is against the aforesaid background of socio-political conditions that the rise of Poros has to be understood.

III

WESTERN ASIA ON THE EVE OF THE RISE OF POROS

The dominant event of the history of Asia in the sixth century B.C. was the foundation and expansion of the Achaemenian empire of Iran. From the outset of the destructive militarism of the Assyrians, particularly the start of stark terrorism of Tilgath Pilesar III in 745 B.C., the people of western Asia were very panicky and disturbed. The raids and intrusions of the nomadic tribes of the steppes, beginning soon afterwards, also added to their worry and anguish. Hence, when a tolerant and soft monarch like Cyrus the Great (559-530 B.C.) promised them unity and peace with least cruelty and oppression, they welcomed and hugged him as a saviour. From the Syr Darya to Asia Minor he maintained the territorial integrity of old states, with the exception of Lydia, giving them the form of provinces and interfering very little with their internal administration, economic set-up and cultural life. His son Cambyses II (530-522 B.C.) had to cope with the rebellion of his brother Bardiya in the east and adopt a stiffer policy in administration. During his campaign in Egypt, many provinces unfurled the banner of revolt and the whole empire was in disorder compelling the emperor to commit suicide. The next ruler Darius (522-486 B.C.) was equal to the occasion and, quelling the troubles in all quarters in nineteen battles, established peace from Sogdiana to Ethiopia and from the Indus Valley to Sparda. Retreating from his campaign against Scythia, he conquered Thrace and Macedonia, and, crossing the Hellespont, annexed the Greek cities of the littoral which gave him the key to the trade of wheat. From there he cast covetous eyes on the city-states of Greece and for a time turned their dissension into unity. The Ionian cities also rose in revolt, but Darius reduced them one by one and then decided on the conquest of Greece. A naval expedition under the Median, Dati, succeeded in occupying Eritrea as a result of treachery of political parties, but the

commander hurt the sentimenes of the Greeks by breaking temples, burning cities, enslaving citizens and transporting them to Susa. A wave of anger and hatred for the Persians swept across Greece and drowned their dissensions and brought them on a platform of unity. Hence, when in 490 B.C. Darius reached the battlefield of Marathon, the Athenians staked their all and turned him out. His son Xerxes (486-465 B.C.) tried to retrieve the failure of his father and sent a vast army recruited from forty-six nations and led by twenty-nine commanders, to conquer Greece. Thrace and Macedonia and the states of northern Greece submitted quietly, but the patriotic elements of Athens, in association with the Spartans, decided on resistance and inflicted a reverse on the enemy. No doubt the Persians suborned the Greeks of Athens and Attica into submission and consigned the city to the flames of fire, but the soldiers did not lose heart and in 480 B.C. decimated the Persian fleet at Salamis. Next year, his general Mardonius against carried fire and sword to these states, but the combined forces of the Greeks defeated him at Plataea, while the Greek warships destroyed the remnants of the Persian fleet off Samos. These successes spurred the Greeks to form the Delian league under the leadership of Athens and free entire Greece from the control of the Persians. Under Artaxerxes I (465-425 B.C.), the Ionian cities also overthrew Greek rule and regained their independence. However, under Darius II, Persian money weaned Sparta away from Athens and restored Persian rule over many Ionian cities. The long reign of Artaxerxes II (404-358 B.C.) saw the constant decline of the Achaemenian empire. Taking adventage of division and dissension at the Persian court, the Greeks took the offensive and launched into Asia. The Ten Thousand Soldiers of Xenophon marched safely to the battlefield of Cunaxa and back; the Spartan Agesilaus summoned the courage to invade Asia Minor; soon afterwards Philip rose in Macedonia and in 338 conquered Athens and, four years later, his twenty-one years old son Alexander crossed the Dardanelles at the head of thirty thousand foot and five

thousand cavalry. The offensive had shifted from the Persians to the Greeks.

Alexander's conquest of the Persian empire is an important landmark of the history of Asia. After the defeat of the Persian satrap in the battle of the Granikos, Alexander occupied Asia Minor. The Achaemenian Emperor Darius III advanced with a vast army to meet Alexander at Issos. His soldiers fought bravely, but his sudden flight from the battlefield at a critical moment turned the scales of victory in favour of the Greeks. Alexander moved south and annexed the Phoenician towns and thence reached Egypt, perhaps, to forestall the union of the Achaemenian and Athenian fleets to cut him off from his homeland as had happened in the case of Agesilaus. After the conquest of Egypt, Alexander struck at the heart of the Achaemenian empire and again defeated Darius between Arbela and Ninevah. There also the dramatic departure of the emperor unnerved his armies and ensured the victory of Alexander. The whole of western Asia was at the feet of the Greeks; Babylon and Susa soon capitulated and the splendid palaces of Persepolis disappeared in the flames of fire. Alexander thought of occupying the throne of the Achaemenids and conquered Bactriana and Sogdiana and measured swords against the highlanders of Afghanistan and thence penetrated into Gandhāra and the Panjab. Thus, it is clear from the above survey of the history of western Asia from the sixth century up to the fourth century B.C. that the Achaemenids proved a potent factor in the forging of Greek unity and canalizing it towards imperial expansion.

The Achaemenian empire introduced new trends of administration and released new forces of socio-economic growth which changed the patterns of life from Greece to Gandhāra. On the failure of the system of local autonomy, followed by Cyrus, Darius introduced a centralized administration, based on the division of the empire in ten provincial and twenty fiscal units, which often cut across tribal frontiers. Each unit was under a governor or satrap drawn from high class Persian nobility. Accompanying him was a military officer also appointed by the centre. Parallel to both of them was a tax collector.

These three officers had equal rank and, besides discharging their duties in respect of administrative, military and fiscal affairs, also kept a close eye on the activities of each other. A secretary acted as a link between the centre and satrapy. In addition to him, inspectors, called the King's eyes and accompanied by military regiments, paid frequent visits to the satrapies for supervision. Every year, special envoys and emissaries of the king toured the provinces. Espionage was fairly developed. Communications were efficient, roads were safe and the postal system was sound.

Like the civil administration, the military system was also thoroughly reorganised. After the victories of Cyrus, the old-fashioned army, called *kār*, was replaced by a new-style salaried army called *spāda*. A special regiment of ten thousand picked soldiers acted as the king's guard. It consisted of Persian and Median warriors. Besides it, the regiments of other nationalities functioned under Persian commanders. A regiment was divided into companies of one thousand soldiers each, a company was divided into squadrons of one hundred soldiers each, a squadron was divided into groups of ten each. In each regiment, soldiers were classed according as they were cavalrymen, archers, lancers, *etc.* Every regiment was distinguished by its national dress, cap, armour and weapons and was sedulously segregated from others. Cavaliers (*asbār*) and infantrymen (*pasti*) constituted the core of the army. Corps of camels were also maintained and Indian elephants were prized. Chariotry was only for show. Bow and arrow and the small sword were the chief weapons in vogue. Soldiers were paid with provisions, meat and wine. Scorched-earth tactics were popular and total destruction of the enemy was the goal.

The state was the source of law. Throughout Mesopotamia the expression *dāta sha sharri* (according to the law of the king) was in vogue. The king's law was administered by judges (*dātabar*) appointed for life from the Persian nobility. Appeals against their decision were preferred in the benches of seven judges and revisions against their findings were heard by the king. The plaintiff had to verify his plaint on oath, the

procedure was strictly followed, a class of lawyers had appeared, punishments were severe, but corruption was checked.

Industry, trade and economic activity made rapid progress. After the introduction of coinage by Croesus of Lydia, monetary transactions were becoming popular. The metals of Asia Minor, Palestine, Lebanon and the Tigris-Euphrates Valley, copper, iron and silver of Cyprus, gold and silver of Kirman, tin of Seistan, stone of Ilam, lapis-lazuli of Badakshan and turquoise and carnelian of Khurasan were transported in large quantities from one place to another. The salted and dehydrated fish of the Persian Gulf, packed in huge containers, was carried over long distances. The glassware of Egypt, the textiles of Corinth, Miletus and Carthage, Attic shields and the swords of Pontus and the spices of India and Ceylon were everywhere in demand. In cities, clothes, gowns, trousers, shoes, furniture, silverware, bronze-work, utensils, ornaments and cosmetics were manufactured on large scale. As a result of commercial growth, prices were on increase and banking was in the ascendant.

A significant feature of the Achaemenian empire was the mixing and meeting of peoples from Greece to the Panjab. If an Indian philosopher discussed philosophy with Socrates, the Greek Sophytes started Spartan institutions in the Panjab. If Demokedus popularized Indian medicine in Greece and Plato discussed the Indian theory of *kafa*, *pitta* and *vāta*, Pāṇini showed acquaintance with Greek writing, Bāṇa and Kṣemendra praised Greek mechanics and Varāhamihira acknowledged the merit of Greek astronomy. If Indian pepper and peacocks were known in Greece, Dionysus and Prometheus were talked about in the Panjab. If Aristeides modelled the Delian League on the Persian pattern, imposed by the Achaemenids on Hellenic cities after the suppression of the so-called Ionian revolt, Kauṭilya envisaged the constitution of the state in the spirit of the centralized administration introduced by them in their satrapies including Gandhāra and Sind. If, in Greece, Philip began and Alexander accomplished the unification of the city-states as the response to the challenge of Achaemenid invasion

and occupation, in India, Poros started and Chandragupta Maurya completed the unification first of the Panjab and then of northern India under the stimulus of the rule of the Achaemenids in the North-West. To sum up, the Achaemenids stimulated the growth and spread of identical trends of unification and centralization in Greece and the Panjab, the result of which was the rise of Alexander and Poros at one and the same time. Thus, it is clear that we can understand the rise of Poros only against the wider background of historical developments in Iran and western Asia during the period of Achaemenid rule.

IV

THE RISE OF POROS

We have considered above the conditions of the Panjab and western Asia on the eve of the rise of Poros. We have seen that at that time the Panjab was the cockpit of the conflicts and struggles and marches and movements of numerous military communities and we have also observed that the dawn of unity and order was shimmering in the horizon following the growth of a new secularist and centralized theory of government under the shadow of Achaemenid institutions at Taxila. Thus the elements of anarchy, isolation and tribalism were clashing with the forces of order, cohesion and empire and producing new trials and experiments which became articulate in the rise of Poros.

We do not hear of Paurava or Poros as an important ruling clan of the Panjab in the grammar of Pāṇini, which shows that he rose to power in the later Nanda period, following his death. In the age of the decadence of the Paurava-Kauravas, as we have seen, members of their clans dispersed in various directions. It appears that in the time of troubles attending the breakdown of Achaemenid rule, while many clans and their chiefs were busy carving out principalities for themselves in the Panjab and the North-West, a chief of the Paurava tribe, later called Poros by Greek writers, also set up an independent kingdom between the Jhelum and the Chenab. At the same time, a scion of the Ambha family, who is called Āmbhi, established himself in eastern Gandhāra .+ Taxila, while western Gandhāra was under Astes of the Hāstināyana clan as well as one Aśvajit. Naturally, the relations between Poros and Ombhis were strained, for, being neighbours, they had conflicting interests.

As a result of the rise of Poros in the doab of the Jhelum and the Chenab, the Greek followers of Sophytes,

stationed there, had to migrate to the doab of the Ravi and the Beas. Greek writers state that the territory between the Chenab and the Ravi was under the rule of a nephew of Poros, called younger Poros. Strabo says that this Poros ruled over the region called Gandaris, but Arrian expressly states that his realm lay to the east of the Chenab. After dealing with the elder Poros, "Alexander resolved to pursue in person the other Poros—the bad one—with the lightest troops in his army, for word had been brought that he had fled from the country of which he was the ruler". Arrian goes on to state that "Alexander, while marching to overake him, arrived at Hydraotes or Ravi". However, he does not mention any tribe or king between the Chenab and the Ravi, implying that it was under the younger Poros. Diodoros also says that the region to the east of that of Poros was ruled by his namesake. It appears that Poros had conquered the territory between the Chenab and the Ravi and appointed his nephew to govern it. But the control of his uncle proved irksome to the younger Poros, who tried to act as an independent ruler. Hence, during Alexander's invasion of Gandhāra, when the attention of Poros was fixed on it, he desired to become free from the suzerainty of his uncle. For the purpose, he tried to hobnob with the Macedonian leader and sent his envoys to him offering submission. However, he could not do anything of note, because the realm of Poros lay between his territory and the camp of Alexander. Inspite of this provocation, Poros was too discreet to divert his energy towards subduing that rebel at that juncture. But, when he had patched up his affairs with Alexander, his first task was to bring him to book. Seized with fear, he fled from his kingdom. Describing this situation, Arrian writes as follows "While hostilities still subsisted between Alexander and the other Poros, this Poros had sent envoys to Alexander offering to surrender into his hands both his person and the country over which he ruled, but this more from enmity to Poros than friendliness to Alexander. But, when he learnt that Poros had not only been set at liberty, but had his kingdom restored to him, and that too with a large accession of territory, he was

overcome with fear, not so much of Alexander, as of his namesake Poros, and fled from his country taking with him as many fighting men as he could persuade to accompany him in his flight". Hence, at his instance, Alexander gave this rebel a hot chase up to the Ravi, but he had made off to the kingdom of the Gandaridai, which may be a mistake for Gangaridai and signify the kingdom of Magadha, for his going to Gandhāra under those circumstances makes little sense. The question arises as to what was the relation between the elder Poros and the younger Poros. The authorities state that the former was the uncle and the latter the nephew. Is it not possible that both of them independently carved out separate kingdoms for themselves between the Jhelum and the Chenab and the Chenab and the Ravi, respectively? The facts suggest an answer in the negative. If the two kingdoms were independent from the very outset why was the younger Poros so afraid of the elder Poros as to be ready first to surrender his person and kingdom to Alexander and then to seek refuge in distant Magadha? Only his rebellious character could make him so nervous and jittery in that situation. Besides this, we hear of the campaign of the elder Poros against the Kṣudraka-Mālavas whose realm lay beyond the kingdom of the younger Poros. If the latter was quite independent, why did he allow passage to the army of the elder Poros through his territory and give him an opportunity to augment his power? These circumstances make it clear that Poros had conquered the doab of the Chenab and the Ravi and attempted to maintain a tight control over it inspite of the recalcitrance of his nephew who was deputed to govern it.

The conquest of the territory between the Jhelum and the Ravi inevitably brought Poros into conflict with the redoubtable Mālavas. We have seen that these people were descended from the Madras who once lived between the Chenab and the Ravi. The annexation of this region by Poros and the pressure of other peoples, dislodged from the north, compelled these people to concentrate in a part of the doab of the Chenab and the Ravi and spread up to the confluence of the Chenab and the Indus with Kot Kamalia, Tulamba and Multan as their principal

seats. Their kith and kin, the Kṣudrakas, lived to the east of them between the Ravi and Sutlej in the region of Bahawalpur and may well have extended up to the confluence of the Sutlej with the Indus near Ucch. Arrian says that these people were "the most numerous and warlike of all the Indian tribes in those parts". Hence, it was not easy for Poros to bring them to subjection. Therefore, he made an alliance with the king of Poonch-Rajori, called Abhisāresa (Abhisares), and, with his help, invaded the kingdom of the Kṣudraka-Mālavas. Side by side, he played the diplomatic game of stirring up other Indian tribes against them. But both war and diplomacy failed to bring them to their knees. As Arrian says, Poros and Abhisares "were obliged, as it turned out, to retreat without accomplishing anything at all adequate to the scale of their preparations". It appears that, to cope with the joint invasion of Poros and Abhisares, the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas also united their armies and offered a combined resistance to the invaders. This confederate military arrangement became a significant feature of their politics and passed into popular parlance, as is clear from a reference to it in a Gaṇasūtra (IV, 2, 45) of the grammar of Pāṇini. These facts prove that, though Poros was foiled in his design to reduce the formidable Kṣudrakas and Mālavas, he did make a valiant bid to expand his realm towards East and South Panjab. They show him on the war path and the way of aggression and expansion.

Poros not only struck east and south but also exerted relentless pressure in the north and the west with the result that his next-door neighbour Āmbhi was seriously menaced and profoundly perturbed by him. Curtius expressly states that Āmbhi was at war both with Poros and Abhisares. This shows that the same combination of forces, which struck at the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas, threatened the existence of Āmbhi. Hence, to cope with the menace, he had trained most of the husbandsmen of his kingdom into soldiers. While these preparations were going, Alexander appeared on the horizon of Gandhāra. Āmbhi took the occasion by the forelock and hastened to befriend him to secure his assistance against Poros and his ally.

While Alexander was yet in Bactria, he sent an embassy to him for forming an alliance with him. We do not know what came out of his moves, but Alexander did invade Gandhāra and reduced its sturdy people. When he was about to cross the Indus, Āmbhi was ready to wait on him with proper gifts and presents. Arrian writes that, when Alexander was on the Indus, the king of Taxila sent him 200 talents of silver, which in terms of gold came to 15 talents, the ratio of silver and gold being $13\frac{1}{3} : 1$. One talent of gold was equal to three thousand gold coins called darics and one daric was of the value of five dollars. Thus Āmbhi offered 45,000 darics, equivalent to 2,25,000 dollars, which, after devaluation, means 16,87,500 rupees, to Alexander. Besides this, he sent him 3000 oxen, 10,000 sheep, 700 horsemen and 30 elephants and even offered to surrender to him his capital Taxila. Why did Āmbhi offer so much money and other things and was ready even to surrender his kingdom to an unknown foreigner with whom he had no earlier acquaintance, much less any diplomatic or other sort of relation? The fact is that Alexander encountered the stiff resistance of the highlanders and nobody could be sure whether he would decide to advance further or retrace his steps. His departure at that juncture meant the annihilation of the kingdom of Āmbhi at the hands of Poros and Abhisares. The magnitude of the impending crisis unnerved and unhinged him to such an extent that, in desperate exasperation, he did not hesitate to offer everything he had to anybody who could come to his rescue. His demeanour and deportment symbolize the shock and terror which Poros had struck in the hearts of his neighbours and contemporaries by virtue of the military strength he had developed. The scene of the entry of Alexander in Taxila is recaptured by Arrian as follows :

"When Alexander had crossed to the other side of the Indus, he again offered sacrifice according to his custom. Then marching away from the Indus, he arrived at Taxila, a great and flourishing city, the greatest, indeed, of all the cities, which lay between the river Indus and the Hydaspes. Taxiles, the governor of the city, and the Indians, who belonged to it,

received him in a friendly manner, and he, therefore, added as much of the adjacent country to their territory as they requested. Here again, in Taxila, Alexander offered his customary sacrifices and celebrated a gymnastic and equestrian contest. Having appointed Philip, the son of Makhatas, satrap of the Indians of that district, he left a garrison in Taxila and those soldiers, who were invalidated, and then moved on towards the river Hydaspes."

When Alexander left Taxila for the Jhelum, Āmbhi also, at the head of 5000 soldiers, accompanied him. The policy and attitude of Āmbhi in this whole affair indirectly hints at the expanding power of Poros.

As said above, the principal ally of Poros was Abhisares, the king of Abhisāra, which represents the region of Poonch, Rajori, Chibhal and Naoshera. His rule extended over the tract of the lower and middle hills lying between the Jhelum and the Chenab. He may have exercised sway over considerable parts of Kaśmīra. Thus, he was quite a powerful and enterprising monarch. He assisted Poros in his campaign against the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas and was with him in his preparations against Āmbhi of Taxila. But, in his heart of hearts, he was sceptical of the friendship of Poros and apprehensive of his growing power. Hence, inspite of the fact that he had made common cause with the highlanders in their struggle against Alexander and, after the fall of Massaga, sent troops across the Indus to aid the inhabitants of that region in resisting him, he made overtures of peace and friendship to him when he was camping at Taxila. Arrian writes that "while he was there, Abhisares, the King of the Indians of the hill country, sent him an embassy which included his own brother and other grandees of his court". Curtius remarks that "on the following day envoys from Abhisares reached the king, and, as they had been instructed, surrendered to him all that their master possessed. After pledges of good faith had been interchanged, they were sent back to their sovereign." Nevertheless, he could also not afford to antagonise Poros all of a sudden and continued to assure him of his help in the encounter with the

Macedonian invader. To quote Arrian again, before the battle of Alexander and Poros, "Abhisares was ready with his army to fight on the side of Poros". As Diodoros says, the army of Abhisares "was but little inferior to that of Poros". In fact, when the army of Alexander crossed over the left bank of the Jhelum, Poros "indulged in the belief that this was his ally Abhisares coming to help him in the war, as had been agreed upon". But Abhisares was pursuing the policy of running with the hare and hunting with the hound. Hence he tarried, probably waiting for the outcome of the battle of the Jhelum, and arrived too late for the assistance of Poros. Soon after the discomfiture of Poros in the battle of the Jhelum, "he sent his brother along other envoys to Alexander taking with them money and forty elephants as a present". Again, when Alexander was moving homeward, "his brother and other relatives came to him bringing presents such as the Indians consider the most valuable and some thirty elephants". Thus, the entire conduct of Abhisares demonstrates that, inspite of his great power, he was haunted by the fear of Poros. This also points to the great military potential of Poros.

It is clear from the above discussion that, in the years preceding the invasion of Alexander, Poros was the dominant power in western Panjab and the fate of all the important states, comprised in it, hinged on his policies and moves. The nervousness of Āmbhi, the vacillation of Abhisāreśa, the rebellion of the younger Poros, the alliance of the Kṣudrakas and the Mālavas, the migration of Sophytes in eastern Panjab, all can be understood and explained only in the context of the rise and expansion of the power of Poros. The very fact that he maintained an army of more than 50,000 foot, about 3,000 horse, above 1,000 chariots and 130 elephants, as Diodoros states, shows that his financial resources must have been enormous. A small ruler of one or two districts could hardly afford to keep such a big army. It is noteworthy that this vast army marched and fought under the single command of Poros showing the degree of centralization introduced by him in his administration following the new trend of political thinking. As

will be clear from the following chapters, this army behaved with good discipline and orderliness on the field of battle and did not display any centrifugal tendency as the tribal arrays of those times usually did. Its organization, solidarity and cohesion shows how effectively Poros could weld the fissiparous military oligarchies of some parts of western Panjab into the steel-frame of a mighty war-machine with tremendous striking potentiality. It is, therefore, no wonder that even foreign kings acknowledged his power and solicited his help in times of need, as we shall presently see.

V

POROS AND DARIUS

We have seen that the dominant feature of Asian history in the fourth century B.C. was the rapid decline of the Achaemenids of Iran. With the poisoning of Artaxerxes III in 338 B.C., a bout of internecine strife for the throne began in Iran. Many claimants for the crown raised their heads and unleashed a storm of death and destruction. When no member of the family survived the catastrophe, a distant relative of the Achaemenids was seated on the throne under the name of Darius III Codomannus. Undoubtedly, the new ruler was brave and able, but in Greece a more enterprising and adventurous leader was coming up and gradually entrenching his hold on Ionian towns, Egypt and Mesopotamia and a larger part of western Asia. Hence, a trial of strength became inevitable between the two and they met each other in three battles: the first on the banks of the river Granikos in 334 B.C., the second at Issos in 333 B.C. and the third at Gaugamela and Arbela in 331 B C. In all these battles, the vast armies, led by Darius, crumbled before the onslaughts of the Macedonian forces and he took to flight in panic and confusion. According to Greek writers, Darius made efforts to raise another army after the disaster of Arbela. When Alexander had captured Babylon, Susa and Persepolis and was marching against the Mardians, he came to know of the efforts that Darius was making at Hamādān to fight once more with him. While giving this information, these writers omit to mention what efforts Darius was making to collect fresh troops. Three times his armies had borne the brunt of the Macedonian onslaughts. His officers and generals were killed or dispersed and their morale was completely crushed. Hence, it is unlikely that Darius was dreaming of getting victory over his triumphant rival, who had routed him on three occasions, by means of his broken and disspirited followers. Obviously, he had some

other source of help in view, which infused some hope of success in his heart. Persian, Syriac and Ethiopic traditions relate that this source of help was the elephant corps of an Indian King Fur, whose name unmistakably recalls that of Poros.

The *Pseudo-Kallisthenes* and its Syriac version state that Darius invited Poros to meet him with an army at the Caspian Gates and promised him half the spoil and Alexander's horse Boukephalas. But, in the *Shāh-nāmā*, Firdausi says that, in course of his flight after his defeat at Arbela, Darius wrote a letter to Alexander in which he set forth his terms of peace with him. Alexander's response to this letter was very favourable, but, in the meantime, Darius was struck with remorse at the thought of surrendering himself at the feet of a foreign invader and leading the life of an humble vassal. Hence, he made another effort to resist and repel Alexander and wrote a letter to Poros requesting him for succour and promising him a rich return. Warners have translated this letter as follows :—

> As there was no one far or near to help,
> He wrote to Fur a humble, flattering letter
> In deep distress and, having first of all
> Praised God, "Ruler of the men of Hind,
> Thou man of wisdom, rede, and ardent soul !
> Thou heard of my misfortune;
> Sikander hath led forth a host from Rum;
> Nor corps or settlements or kin or children,
> Or crown or throne or royal diadem,
> Or treasury or host are left to us.
> Now if you will help me to keep away
> Destruction from myself I will despatch
> So many gems to thee out of my treasures
> That never shalt thou need to toil for more.
> Moreover, thou shalt be renowned on earth
> And held in honour by the great."

The Ethiopic version of the *Pseudo-Kallisthenes* also refers to the invitation extended by Darius to Poros. To quote the translation of Ernst A. Wallis Budge :

"And it came to pass that Darius wrote to Poros, the King of India, and he asked him (for help) in his letter saying this :

From Darius, who was the king of kings, to Poros, king of India (Greetings). Formerly I dwelt in my kingdom in glory and power, but now I entreat thee to receive me, and to be pleased graciously to help me, because of this mighty man of war, who hath come upon me; he knoweth not fear, his courage is mighty, and his body is thick, and I never saw his like either among kings or among all other men. Behold, too, he hath gained possession of my women, who are the source of my depravity, and behold, I came upon the Greeks in several places, but I was not able to beat them. And he hath overcome me and put me to shame, because there was none (among us) able to do battle against him. He hath taken my kingdom, and hath carried into captivity my mother and my wife and my daughter, and there is nothing left to me but death; and it is better for me to die than to become his servant. And now help me, and do thou take heed to the love, which hath always existed between us, and then make ready for me an army of the soldiers of the country, for (Alexander and his hosts) are mighty men of war and are strong. Hasten thou to me with this army, for I place my hope and confidence in thee and I will abide on the borders of my country until thy message shall reach me, and I will deal graciously with those, who shall come unto me from thyself, and I will reward them abundantly with possessions. If I conquer Alexander, I will send to thee one half of whatever I find with him.

And it came to pass that; when Alexander heard these things, he straightway ordered his army to make ready for war and he and all those, who were with him, rose up, and they pursued Darius, the King."

This letter shows that Darius considered Poros the king of India and a very wise and powerful man and

ardently counted on his support and assistance. It also reveals that, in the event of success, Darius promised him half the spoils also. In fact, in that dark hour of distress, the prospect of the help of this Indian ally was the only ray of hope for him.

Poros made an immediate response to the request of Darius and sent his elephant corps for his help. It is queer to imagine how the Indian war-elephants scaled the hills and crossed the dales of Afghanistan on their way to Iran and western Asia. But, in ancient times, it did happen many times. About a quarter of a century later, 500 elephants, ceded by Chandragupta, followed Seleucos across Afghanistan, and, more than a century later, 150 elephants, given by Subhāgasena, went with Antiochus along the same route. While thinking of these events, the vision of the historian goes to the Roman world, when Hannibal carried thirty-seven elephants from Spain across the intense cold and snow of the Little Bernard Pass through the Alps to Italy or when Pyrrhus transported them from Epiros to South Italy. In fact, the demand of elephants in the western world went on increasing and they turned the scales of victory in many memorable battles which decided its fate.

As the elephants of Poros advanced for the help of Darius, Alexander got scent of his arrangements and swooped upon him with great force and alacrity. To quote Firdausi :

"Sikander, on hearing what Dara, son of Darab,
Had done, bade blow the trumpet. There arose
The din of Kettledrum and Indian bell.
Sikandar from Istakhr led forth such powers
That sol was lost in heaven."

Darius speedily collected the remnants of his broken army and tried to withstand the attack of Alexander. But his troops had no heart to fight with the buoyant hosts of the Macedonian conqueror. Hence, many of his chiefs deserted him and sided with the enemy. As the poet says :

"When Dara

Led forth his troops, no army bent on strife,
But broken—hearted and grown sick of war,
The fortune of the Iranians drooped its head.
They closed not with the Rumans hand to hand ;
They were the fox, the Rumans were the lion,
And all the chiefs asked quarter, having come
Down from their pride to deep humility."

Only three hundred cavaliers followed the king in his flight, but, finding him a broken reed to lean upon, his ministers assassinated him and went over to the side of Alexander :

"Dārā saw, turned away, and fled lamenting
With him there went three hundred cavaliers
The noblest of Iran.
Night gloomed, a storm arose, Janusiyar
Laid hand upon a dagger, stabbed the king
Upon the breast, that famed head reached its fall
And then the troops deserted, one and all."

Meanwhile, the elephant corps of Poros also arrived, but it was too late. The emperor, who counted on it, was no more. As Firdausi makes Poros say :

"When Dārā asked help
And I perceived his heart and fortune failing,
I sent him mighty elephants and gave him
Words of encouragement, when he was slain
By that slave's hand, the Iranians' fortune fell,
And when earth's face was franchised from Dārā
That trenchant bane become thine antidote."

It is well-known that Firdausi was not the inventor of the anecdotes found in his *Shāh-nāmā*. He rather based his work on the historical traditions current among the Persian Dihqāns, who constituted the lower landed gentry and the actual preservers of the national traditions and legends of Iran. These traditions are referred to as early as the fifth century A.D. by the Armenian author Moses of Khorene. During the reign of Naushirwan, an effort was made to collect them and, under Yazdegird, their collection was revised by the Dihqān Danishwar and his colleagues. From their labour came the famous Pehlvi

work *Khudāi-nāmā* which was translated later into Arabic by al-Muqaffa and into Persian by Abu-al-Mansur-al M'amari. The poet Daqiqi also set his hand on this theme and lastly Firdausi gave it a lasting form in his *Shāh-nāmā*. Thus, it is clear that the informations, given by Firdausi, are not fictitious, but rest on old Pehlvi traditions which go back to a very ancient period and as such are worthy of sufficient credence.

The trustworthiness of the account of Firdausi is demonstrated by the fact that it agrees with what we know about the history of Darius from other sources. Firdausi gives a correct account of the battles of Darius and Alexander and states that the first two were fought on the western side of the Euphrates. He also rightly affirms that Darius flew from the battle-fields just when the issue of war hang in balance, that his flights spread such panic in his troops that they either flew or went over to the enemy and that Alexander treated the conquered country with due courtesy and regard. He thus avoids the error of the Syriac tradition that there was only one battle between Darius and Alexander and steers clear of the confusion of the Arabic historian Hisham-bin-Muhammad who, as quoted by Tabari, remarks that they fought for one year in Mesopotamia. Besides this, he escapes the fallacy of Arabic writers that the murder of Darius was encompassed with the connivance of Alexander and says that one of his own ministers killed him. All this shows that Firdausi's account of the last days of Darius rests on a better tradition than that of the Syriac and Arabic writings and his treatment of the episode of the request of Darius to Poros for military assistance, which accords well with the Syriac works also, cannot be rejected as merely fictitious. There is no valid reason why we should dismiss old Pehlvi traditions of ancient Iran on the ground that Greek works are silent about the episodes they mention. An *argumentum ex silentio* is always a weak line of reasoning, but is loses all its force when positive evidence, going back to ancient sources, is available for establishing a fact.

The fact that the Indian contingents of troops fought on

the side of Darius and especially that Poros tried to help him by sending his elephant corps must have irritated Alexander. The Ethiopic version of the *Pseudo-Kallisthenes* is explicit on this point. Budge has translated the relevant passage as follows :—

> "And Alexander heard that Poros, the King of India, had come to the aid of Darius, the King of Persia, but, when Poros heard that Darius was slain, he returned to his country together with his troops. And Alexander entreated God Almighty to help him against Poros, the King of India, and concerning the armies which he had gathered together, and he commanded his soldiers to make ready to march."

It is not unlikely that Alexander felt himself shaky as the heir of the Achaemenids till a powerful rival like Poros, interested in the affairs of Iran, was not eliminated from the scene. This may be one of the reasons compelling Alexander to lead his forces towards Afghanistan and the Panjab.

VI
POROS AND THE *MAHĀBHĀRATA*

We have seen that Poros acquired so much power that his fame spread to foreign countries like Iran. In India also his name was perpetuated through some traditions recorded in the *Mahābhārata*. This work is a storehouse of the legends and traditions of different provinces and periods all of which, have been woven in the central plot of the struggle of the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas. It refers to many kings and heroes of the Paurava family, but one reference is particularly significant for our purpose. In the second parvan, called Sabhāparvan, a Paurava king is mentioned as having been encountered and conquered by Arjuna in course of his north-western expedition. A variant of the word *paurava* in the Telugu version of the manuscript of the Yadugiri Yatiraja Math Library (TI) is *pauruṣa*. Again, in the Bhīṣmaparvan (VI. 111, 27), in the description of the charge on Bhīṣma on the tenth day of the battle, Dhṛṣṭaketu is said to have engaged *Paurava*, the variant of which in the manuscript, called DI, is *pauruṣa*. Obviously, this variant *pauruṣa* in II, 24, 13 as well as VI, 111, 27 recalls to the mind the name of Poros. Bohlen suggests that the original form of the name of *Poros* is *pauruṣa*. It may well be that the title Pauruṣa was given to this king on account of his valour and bravery, while Paurava was his family or clan name. The Greek designation seems to suggest both these names. In II, 24, 15 a variant of *Pauravam* in the Malabar Poomulli Mana Library manuscript is *Pauravas*, which may also suggest the same name. The use of the name *Pauruṣa* or *Pauravas* seems to indicate the attempt of some editor of the epic at incorporating and accommodating the name of *Poros*, as distinguished from the generality of the Pauravas, in the framework of its legendary structure. But, since this king is placed on the side of the Kauravas, who are eventually represented as the vanquished, he is also shown to have shared their lot.

Nevertheless, his valour and heroism is openly praised. In VI, 17, 26, he is said to have figured in the vanguard of the Kaurava forces along with the kings of the Kaliṅgas and the Kāmbojas. He was expected to destroy the Pāñcālas of the Pāṇḍava side with his flaming forces and to vanquish the armies even of the gods, demons and Gandharvas with his fiery missiles (V,167,19-20). In VI, 112, 13-16, we have a glowing description of his charge on Dhṛṣṭaketu which may be summarized as follows :

The Paurava king severely battered Dhṛṣṭaketu, of big bow and big chariot, charging him with arrows in the battle. Similarly, the powerful Dhṛṣṭaketu, having a big chariot, afflicted the Paurava with thirty sharp arrows. Thereupon, the Paurava shattered the bow of Dhṛṣṭaketu and injured him with ten arrows and raised a loud cry. Darṣṭaketu took up another bow and darted the Paurava with seventy-three piercing arrows, Then the Paurava, burning with anger and saying 'stand, stand', inflicted a blow of his great sword on the body of Dhṛṣṭaketu, who also lanced him with the pointed edge of his great sword. Then Dhṛtarāṣṭra's son Jayatsena, placing the Paurava on his chariot, drove out of the battlefield.

There is also a graphic description of the duel of Abhimaṇyu and the Paurava in the Droṇaparvan (VII, 14, 59–61). He attacked the latter in a dramatic way and suddenly jumping into his chariot caught him by the hair. Then Jayadratha came and rescued him. On another occasion (VII, 37, 6), we find the Paurava together with Vṛṣasena charging Abhimanyu with sharp arrows. He occupied an important position in the *Chakrayvūha* devised to entrap Abhimanyu. Sātyaki, in his report to Yudhiṣṭhira, bracketed his people, the Pauravas, with the Indus people, the Saindhavas, and the people of Sind, the Sauvīrakas (VII, 111, 28-29). In VIII. 4, 35 Arjuna is said to have killed him.

In the Sabhāparvan (II, 24, 13-15), we hear of Paurava or Pauruṣa in connection with the north-western expedition of Arjuna. There his name is given as *Viṣvagaśva*, the variants of which are *Viśvagaśva*, *Vivegāśva*, *Viveśāśva* and *Viṣagaśva*. All these names have an *aśva-aspa* ending, which is a characteristic feature of Iranian culture, that was dominant in the Panjab in the post-Achaemenid period. This king is further said to be accompanied by mountainous warriors whom Arjuna defeated. But the southern recension of the *Mahābhārata* reads this verse differently meaning that Paurava or Pauruṣa was himself called Pārvatīya whom Arjuna vanquished. In 1, 61, 28 also a variant of *Paurava* is *Pārvateya*. This shows that Paurava was equated with Pārvateya. In this connection, it is noteworthy that the *Mudrārākṣasa* (II, 126-7), the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* (VIII 290-99), the *Vaṁsatthappakāsinī* (Vol. I p. 183), the *Sukhabodhā* and other Indian texts mention a powerful king of the North, Pārvataka, who collaborated with Chandragupta Maurya in the conquest of Magadha and whom F. W. Thomas and Radha Kumud Mookerjee proposed to identify with Poros himself. The equation of Paurava-Pauruṣa-Pārvateya lends colour to the identification of Poros and Parvataka. We shall take up this topic again later.

It can be easily concluded from the above discussion that Paurava-Pauruṣa of the *Mahābhārata* seems to enshrine a reminiscence of Poros. Of course, the Pauravas are a well-known ancient clan, which played an important part in the early history of North India, as we have seen in the first chapter. But the fact that the name *Pauruṣa* is introduced as a variant of *Paurava* at some places, mentioned above, shows the intention of some editor to engraft the legend of Poros on the traditions of the Pauravas, contained in the Epic.

VII

POROS AND ALEXANDER

In May 327 B.C., Alexander advanced towards India. He had already consolidated his hold over the Persian empire and secured his rear. Rulers of frontier hill-states, like Sisikottos (Śaśigupta), out of the motive of sheer loot and plunder in the train of invading armies, assured him of their assistance. Kings of the North-West, like Āmbhi of Taxila, menaced by the impending invasion of Poros and Abhisares, had sent him envoys with the invitation to come and the promise of full support. The idea of rounding off the conquest of the erstwhile Achaemenid empire, whose master and heir Alexander considered himself, may also have led him to advance in the direction of India. The fame of the might of Poros, the offer of his help to Darius, followed by the despatch of his elephant corps for his help, and the view that it was not desirable to let a powerful king live and flourish across the frontier of an empire may also have inclined the Macedonian leader to lead his buoyant armies towards the Panjab before their enthusiasm had cooled down. Lastly, the romantic vision of the conquest of the whole world, which haunted his mind from childhood, may have impelled him on a perilous march through the northern mountains. Thus, ambition, chagrin, strategy, policy and invitation all combined to make Alexander face the hazards of the Indian campaign.

On crossing the Hindukush and reaching Nikaia, in the vicinity of modern Jalalabad, Alexander divided his army into two parts, one under Hephaistion and Perdikkas was ordered to proceed through the Kabul Valley towards Gandhāra, and the other was to follow the king in the hilly country north of the Kabul river to subdue the unruly tribes, living there, and secure his rear and flanks. Ascending the valley of the Kunar river, Alexander reduced the clans of the highlanders, who defied foreign conquest and domination. The Aspasians and Assakenoi, Āśvāyanas and Āśvakāyanas, probably representing

the Kāmboja tribes, whose cemeteries have been located in the necropolises of Butkara II, Katelai I and Loebaur I in the Swat Valley, offered stiff resistance, but were defeated, and their strongholds of Massaga, Bajaur and Aornos taken by storm. The Greek colony of Nysa surrendered and was spared. There the Macedonian army gave itself up to revelry and pleasure. At that time, an Indian, called Aphrikes, probably a leader of the Afridi tribe, was hovering about in that locality with 20,000 soldiers and 15 elephants. He held a strategic defile, but suddenly, a dispute arose among his followers and some of them killed him and presented his head to Alexander. Crossing the pass, Alexander arrived on the Indus. In the meantime, the corps of Hephaistion and Perdikkas advanced towards Gandhāra and other chiefs accompanied them. The chieftains of that region, like Kophaios (Kubheśa) and Assagetes (Aśvajit), knuckled under, even the chief of Peukelaotis (Puṣkalāvatī), Astes (Hastin), submitted, though he soon revolted and perished in the attempt. After a siege of thirty days, Hephaistion captured the town, where he had fled for refuge. Then he marched on the Indus and made preparations for the crossing of the army. Alexander also joined him and the joint army crossed over to Taxila, where it partook of the hospitality of its king Āmbhi for thirty days to which a reference has already been made above.

From Taxila, Alexander sent an envoy to Poros asking him to pay tribute and come to meet him. To quote Curtius, he, "thinking that by the mere prestige of his name, Poros also would be induced to surrender, sent Cleochares to tell him in peremptory terms that he must pay tribute and come to meet his sovereign at the very frontiers of his own dominions. Poros answered that he would comply with the second of these demands, and, when Alexander entered his realm, he would meet him, but come armed for battle". Firdausi cites in detail, but in his own poetic diction, the correspondence that passed between these two monarchs. This set the stage for a military showdown between them along the bank of the Jhelum.

Alexander marched towards the Jhelum. Just on the eve of his departure, the rebel Barzaentes (Bṛhanta ?), who had instigated the Arachosians to revolt, was brought in chains. Samaxus, the king of an Indian state, who had espoused the cause of the Arachosians, was also presented in fetters. Along with them thirty elephants were also admitted to the Greek camp. The King of Taxila had already presented fifty-six elephants to him. Thus, he had with him at least eighty-six beasts ready for war. Curtius says that these beasts "were an opportune reinforcement against the Indians", since they "constituted the hope and main strength of an Indian army". The hint is that they were meant to be used for war purposes.

Before narrating the battle of the Jhelum, that occurred between Alexander and Poros, it is necessary to say something about their respective armies, armaments and social customs.

Alexander's father Philip had created a national army on a broad basis. Besides cavalry and infantry, he recruited archers and all kinds of light armed troops and thus had many mobile elements in his army which could be used in a great variety of ways. Hence, the army, that followed Alexander, had a composite and variegated character. We may divide it under the following heads :

1. Companions (Agema).

This corps consisted of choice cavalrymen drawn from noble families. In it every horse with its rider was encased in armour. They had also a section of foot-soldiers. At the beginning of the campaign, this body consisted of 1,500 men, but, in the course of the war, their number was increased, perhaps, to 5,000. It was the most esteemed arm of the Macedonian army.

2. Hoplites

Known after the oblong shield, called *hoplon*, they formed the core of the Spartan army. Among them, every soldier wore heavy armour, carried a sword, a spear and an oval shield which covered the whole body. Thus, they constituted the heavy infantry which was well-trained and densely massed for the fight.

3. Hypaspists

Known after the round shield, called *aspis*, they were not so heavily armed as the Hoplites and were more rapid in their movements. Their spears were shorter, their swords longer and their armours lighter than those of the phalanx. At the outset, they formed a body of about 3,000 men, but, during the progress of war, were augmented to double that number. Often they worked in cooperation with the foot-soldiers of the ranks of the companions.

4. Phalanx

In it the soldiers wore full defensive armour, consisting of a helmet, a breast plate and two long curved plates protecting the thighs, but not covering the shins. They carried four feet long swords, long shields and long spears called *sarissa*. This spear was twenty-four feet in length and weighed at six feet from its butt-end, so that, when balanced in the soldier's hand at that point, it projected eighteen feet before him. Philip reduced the formation of the phalanx to sixteen deep. When a man in the front ranks fell, a fresh soldier from the eighth or still hinder ranks rushed forward to fill the vacant place, so as not to let the column lose its compactness and uniformity. As the phalanx marched or charged, it presented the appearance of a gigantic porcupine or a moving forest of glittering steel points. In the army of Alexander, there were seven battalions of the phalanx commanded by Klitos the White, Antigones, Meleager, Attalus, Gorgias, Polyparchon and Alketas, respectively.

Tarn has estimated that Alexander had 15,000 infantry with him.

5. Cavalry

Besides infantry, Alexander had 5,300 cavalry consisting of two regiments led by Koinos. In addition to them, he had light cavalry of the Thracians and Thessalians called *Agrianians*. In Asia, he had also enlisted mounted Scythian archers who were armed with the composite bow, the most dreaded weapon of antiquity. They were sure shots and their missiles pierced cuirass and shield alike. They were particularly useful for skirmishing and harassing the enemy ranks from a

distance. Tarn thinks that the number of archers in Alexander's army was 14,500.

6. Elephants

Alexander had also eighty-six elephants, as said above, and he entrusted them to the King of Taxila, though his historians do not assign any role to them in the battle of the Jhelum.

7. Machines

Alexander had also the machines called balists and catapults which were worked by the hand and threw stones and darts to a distance of 300 yards.

Besides Alexander's own army, his friend, the King of Taxila, accompanied him with 5000 troops.

This army was thoroughly drilled and disciplined and behaved with perfect cohesion and integration cemented by unshakable loyalty to its chief.

The army of Poros represented the stalwarts of western Panjab. Greek writers noted that the people of that region were among the tallest men in Asia, being five cubits in height, or nearly so. In complexion, they were blacker than other men except the Ethiopians. Their bearing was dignified and graceful. They dressed themselves down to the feet with fine muslin, wore shoes of white leather, having thick soles, and coiled their heads with turbans of linen or cotton. They frequently combed their hair, but seldom cut them. They also let grow the moustache and developed beards on the chin, but shaved the rest of the face. They wore pendants of precious stones in the ears and the rich among them also wore golden armlets and bracelets. By and large, they were not luxurious in their style of living and in the art of war they were far superior to the other peoples of Asia of that time.

The army of Poros was the result of a long process of military development in India across the ages. In Vedic texts, we hear only of infantry (*patti*) and chariotry (*rathins*), but the epics speak of the four-limbed army, consisting of infantry, chariotrv. cavalry and elephantry, as well as the eight-limbed army

comprising infantry, chariots, horses, elephants, ships, spies, commissariat and scouts or local guides. Kauṭilya adds that the army must also have a corps of camels and asses to operate in dry weather on non-marshy ground. He also emphasizes the need of medical and ambulance units, consisting of surgeons carrying with them surgical instruments, ointments, bandages and medicines and assisted by nurses ready with foods and beverages. He also recommends priests, preachers and astrologers to infuse courage among the soldiers by holding out the prospect of happiness in heaven.

The army was recruited from a variety of sources, like *maula* (the kinsmen and followers of the king), *bhṛta* (mercenary soldiers engaged on pay), *śreṇī* (various warrior-clans who lived by the profession of arms), *mitrabala* (army supplied by the allies), *amitrabala* (troops recruited from the enemy country) and *aṭavībala* (forest and aboriginal tribes). Caste was no consideration in recruitment, since Kauṭilya expressly provides that the army could be recruited from all the castes, Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra. We have seen that in the Panjab members of all the castes from the Brāhmaṇas to the Śūdras set up the colonies of professional soldiers who lived by fighting and plunder and lent their services to those who liked to engage them on pay. Nevertheless, Kṣatriya soldiers were considered the best by reason of their proficiency and heritage.

1. Infantry

The infantry was considered superior to other arms, since it was capable of campaigning on all sorts of terrain and in all kinds of weather. Most of the infantrymen carried bows as long as themselves. Resting the bow on the ground with the left hand, the archer pressed it with the left foot and putting the arrow on the string with the right hand drew it far backwards and discharged it with great force. The arrows were about three yards long and tipped with bone or iron. Their shot was irresistible, breaking even shields, breastplates and strong defences. Some soldiers carried javelins, discs, tridents, maces and bats and sharp-edged cutting objects, axes and even

piercing slings and darts and bore bucklers of undressed oxhide, which were not so broad as their bodies, but were just of their size in length. All soldiers wore swords, broad in the blade, but not longer than three cubits, and wielded them with both hands to fetch down lustier blows in close fights. The swords were of three kinds, with crooked point, with curved blade and sharp and long. Kauṭilya mentions several types of coats of mail, like *lohajāla* (iron chain armour) *lohapaṭṭa* (iron-plate), quilted and padded garments, and armours of the skins of rhinoceros, alligator and elephant, consisting of helmets, collars, arm-guards, breast-plates, belts, *etc.*

2. Chariots

Chariotry was also an important organ of the army. Kauṭilya says that the chariots were used for the protection of the army, repelling the enemy's attacks, seizing and changing positions during operations, restoring broken arrays and columns, breaking the compact lines of the enemy and frightening and inspiring awe among the soldiers by magnificence and sound. The chariots were 7.5 feet in height and 9 feet in width. Each chariot was drawn by four horses and carried six men of whom two were shield-bearers, two archers, posted on each side, and two drivers, who not only controlled and directed the steeds, but, in close combats, dropped the reins and hurled dart after dart on the enemy. In dry and level plains, these chariots must have added to the strength and mobility of the army.

3. Cavalry

Cavalry is recommended by Kauṭilya for supervising the discipline of the army, lengthening its line, protection of its sides, leading the charge, turning the movements of the army, pursuit and the like. Horses of Sindhu, Kāmboja and Bālhīka country were highly prized. Arrian stated that the Indians did not put saddles on the horses nor curbed them with their bits, but fitted round the extremity of the horse's mouth a circular piece of stitched raw ox-hide studded with pricks of iron or brass pointing inwards. According to him, within the horse's

mouth was a piece of iron, like dart, to which the reins were fastened. But Megasthenes gave a different account of the riding practice. He said that the Indians used to control their horses with bit and bridle and make them move at a measured pace and in a straight course ; they neither galled their tongues by the use of spiked muzzles nor tortured the roofs of their mouths. The use of stirrups is not attested in that period and is manifestly a late development. Thus, riding without saddles and stirrups must have been quite uncomfortable. In fact, cavalry was relatively a weak and unimportant arm of the Indian military system, and, from this point of view, Greek cavalry, reinforced by Asiatic units, was decidedly a stronger and more effective force.

In the Indian army there was no such thing as cavalry of archers.

4. Elephants

The fourth and a quite significant part of the army consisted of the elephants-of-war. Kauṭilya was all praise for them. According to him, their special work was marching in the front, moving without roads, shelters and landing places, penetrating through bushes and shrubs, breaking through the lines and columns of the enemy, setting fire to the enemy's camp and quenching it in one's own, trampling and terrorising the enemy and destroying gates, towers and ramparts. Except in summer, they could be employed in all seasons, rains being specially suitable for their use. Megasthenes wrote that an elephant carried three fighters besides a mahount—two shot from the sides and the third from behind. These fighters either sat in howdahs, open or covered, or on the bare back of the animal. The howdah of the king or the commander was like a gilded tower, richly carved and furnished. Besides the occupant, it carried a great number of arms, missiles and javelins which he darted at the enemy. The heads of the elephants were sheathed in brass or steel plates and their tusks set with sharp sabres or bayonets. Kauṭilya provided for padded and quilted covers for various limbs of the elephants.

The elephant was a terror on the battle-field and spread

disaster all around. From the time of the battle of the Jhelam between Poros and Alexander in 326 B.C. to that of Tukaroi between Akbar's general Munim Khan and the Pathan Sultan of Bengal Daud Khan Karrani the charge of the elephants remained irresistible. But the might and massiveness of the elephants were more than counterbalanced by the mobility and quickness of the cavalry. This is why in many decisive battles elephants proved a source of disaster and defeat. In particular, whereas they facilitated an effective control of the operations by carrying the commander at a high seat, they also prominently exposed him to the shots of the enemy and thus made him easily vulnerable. Of course, some leaders like Poros could be saved unto the last, but others like Jayacandra Gāhaḍavāla and Viśvāsarāo died in the heat of the encounter which demoralised their armies and spelt their defeat.

Kauṭilya also mentions war-machines, but we are ignorant of their technology or way of using in actual warfare.

Diodoros says that Poros had an army of 50,000 foot, about 3,000 horses, above 1,000 chariots and 130 elephants. This army acted under unified command and fought under one banner marked by the figure of a god whom the Greeks called Hercules and who may be Viṣṇu or Gaṇeśa. The accounts of the battle of Poros and Alexander shows that there was sufficient cohesion and correlation among its various parts. They suggest that it was different from the heterogenous levies working on tribal and territorial basis under the command of their own leaders. Naturally, its working implied a heirarchy of officers like that outlined by Kauṭilya. He observed that 200 foot, 10 chariots, 50 horses and 10 elephants formed a squadron under the command of a *padika;* such ten units or 2,000 foot, 100 chariots, 500 horses and 100 elephants made a company under a *senāpati*; such ten units or 20,000 foot, 1000 chariots, 5,000 horses and 1000 elephants constituted a regiment under a *nāyaka.* The entire infantry had a special officer *pattyādhyakṣa.* Similarly, there must have been special officers for other arms also. To maintain this type of army, a war-office, consisting of an elaborate bureaucratic set-up and backed by adequate financial resources, must have been necessary. If a well-maintained army is an index to the vigour and efficiency of the government, the administration of Poros can be said to be of a fairly high pitch and order.

The above survey of the armies of the Greeks and the Indians shows that both of them had their strong and weak points. The former excelled in mobility and equipment and the latter stood out by weight and might and was rather bound by the terrain and the weather.

VIII

BATTLE OE THE JHELUM

On the failure of the mission of Cleochares, Alexander decided to march against Poros. But the roaring river Jhelum separated him from the domain of his rival. On the left side of it, Poros has amassed and arrayed his troops and, to quote Arrian. "was resolved either to prevent Alexander from making the passage or to attack him when crossing". On learning this, Alexander sent back Koinos to the river Indus to break up all the boats, that had been constructed for crossing that river, and bringing them in pieces to the Hydaspes. Accordingly, the smaller boats were cut, each into two sections, and the thirty-oared galleys into three, and the sections were then transported on wagons to the banks of the Jhelum. There the boats were reassembled and made into a flotilla for crossing that river.

After making the said arrangement, Alexander with his army and that of the King of Taxila marched on the Jhelum. The difficulty of the passage must have been increased by heavy rain. In the hilly and rugged country, the army must have waded through beds of torrents. General Chesney thinks that Alexander did not make a direct descent on the Jhelum, but took a more southerly line and treading his way through the intricate ravines of the upper part of the Salt Range, and leaving Tilla and Rohtas on his left, penetrated the range by the gorge, through which runs the Bhundar river, and struck the river Jhelum at Jalalpur about thirty miles below the town of Jhelum. Cunningham also agrees with Chesney and holds that Alexander did not take the upper road past Rawalpindi, Manikyala and Rohtas to Jhelum, but advanced on the lower route which proceeded southwards to Dudhial and then *via* Asanot and Vang reaches Jalalpur. According to him, his camp extended for about six miles along the bank of the Jhelum from Shah Kabir, two miles to the north-east of

Jalalpur, down to Syadpur, four miles to the west-south-west. However, A. Burnes, General Court and General Abbott do not agree with this view and think that Alexander directly reached the region of the Jhelum. Following them, V.A. Smith and E.R. Bevan also hold that Alexander marched from Shahdheri by Rohtas and the Bakrala Pass to the Jhelum which has a ferry infinitely more convenient and only one-third the width of the Jalalpur ferry. This route is suggested by the remark of Strabo that throughout his march Alexander kept closer to the foot of the mountains than to the plains, since it was easier to cross the rivers near the hills than in the plains.

Alexander encamped on the bank of the river Jhelum with Poros and his army on the opposite bank. Curtius has painted the scene as follows :

> "The river spreading out to a width of four stadia presented the aspect of a vast sea. Yet its rapidity did not diminish in proportion to its wider diffusion, but it rushed impetuously like a seething torrent compressed into a narrow bed by the closing in of its banks. Besides, at many points, the presence of sunken rocks was revealed where the waves were driven back in eddies. The bank presented a still more formidable aspect, for, as far as the eye could see, it was covered with cavalry and infantry, in the midst of which, like so many massive structures, stood the huge elephants, which, being of set purpose provoked by their drivers, distressed the ear with their frightful roars."

We can imagine the noise of soldiers, neighing of horses, trumpeting of elephants and lumbering of chariots, mixing with the roar of the river and filling the horizon and baffling the people over long distances; and the glitter of cars, rattle of arms, majesty of towering beasts, rows of spacious tents and canopies, together with arrays and columns of parading troops, adding to the romance and glamour of the moment. Constant vigilance, acute suspense, intense alertness and keen expectancy must have kept everybody on his toes and strained his nerves to the maximum degree.

As the armies flanked the banks ready to take each other by surprise and looking for the opportunities to do so from their respective sides, the Jhelum was roaring with turbid and rapid currents over an expanse of four stadia or 809 yards near the town of Jhelum and double that width near Jalalpur and foiling the designs of the belligerents. For about a month from May to the end of June or beginning of July, the two armies confronted each other in a state of preparedness and discomfiture. Poros faced the camp of Alexander, but sent detachments of his army to guard all parts of the river which could possibly be forded. Alexander also moved his army from place to place so that his adversary might be at a loss to discover his real intentions. For this purpose, he divided his army into many parts and himself led some of the troops in different directions, sometimes to ravage the country and sometimes to find where he could easily ford the river. He placed various commanders at various times over different divisions of the army and posted them at different positions. At the same time, he collected provisions from all parts of the country to maintain his camp and to impress on Poros that he intended to remain encamped there till the river subsided with the approach of winter in October. But though he publicly announced his intention to stay on until the change of season, he was always on a look-out for some point where he could steal a passage to the other side without being observed. It was clear to him that it was impossible to cross at any place facing the army of Poros which was always arrayed for battle and ready to attack his troops the moment they landed. He also visualized that his horses would not be able to meet the charge of the elephants of the other side and in sheer horror would leap from the boats and hides into the whirling river. Hence, he resolved to steal a passage imperceptibly and surreptitiously and take Poros unawares. For this purpose, he began to lead out by night the greater part of his cavalry along the river bank in different directions and order them to raise a loud clamour and cry out the name of their war-god Enyalios as if ready to attempt the passage.

Seeing this, Poros also marched with his elephants to the position opposite the assemblage of the Greeks and arrayed his troops to pounce on the landing army. In this way, the rival troops advanced and retreated and arrayed and dispersed along the banks of the Jhelum every night. When this process went on over many nights, Poros began to doubt the seriousness of the Greeks in effecting the passage and no longer ordered any countermovement when the cavalry issued out from the camp, but remained within his own lines, his spies being, however, posted at numerous points along the bank. Thus, he was out of scent and a bit complacent.

In the meantime, boats were constantly plying up and down the stream and the skins were being filled with hay and soldiers from both sides plunged into the river holding their weapons above their heads and swam to accessible positions on islands within the river and engaged in contests and skirmishes amidst the plaudits of the armies lining the banks, and with their successes and failures caused an ebb and flow of hope and despair in the hearts of those onlookers. One day a group of desperate youths, led by the adventurous Symmachus and Nicanor, carrying nothing but lances, swam over to an island crowded by the men of Poros. Immediately on landing, they slew a few of the soldiers of the other side and kept flaunting their courage and pride. Very soon succour came from the bank and the Greeks were outnumbered and overwhelmed by Paurava troops and perished in the rain of missiles that followed. Some of them, who could escape, were swept by the force of the current or swallowed by the bubbling eddies. Poros and his men exultantly watched this incident from the bank and gained in confidence and hope. Such episodes frequently occurred and caused a rhythmic swing of lament and jubilation among the rival combatants.

Meanwhile, Alexander found a suitable place for crossing the river 150 stadia or 17 miles away from his camp. There the river made a remarkable bend and from its bank rose a bluff densely covered with trees. Near this bluff was a deep ravine which served to screen the cavalry and the infantry.

Facing this bluff was an untrodden island overspread with dense forest. Cunningham locates this site near the bed of the Kandar Nala near Jalalpur, but Tarn objects to this view, since the bend of the river at that place is slight and not 'notable', as Arrian states. Abbott and Smith also say that there is no such bend between the villages of Mandiala and Kothera above Jalalpur. In their view, the said bend is near Bhuna, south-east of Mangla. This place is at a distance of fourteen miles from the township of Jhelum and, if approached by a slightly circuitous way, may have been seventeen miles from there, as the Greek writers state. By choosing that site for stealing a passage across the river, Alexander visualized the advantage of moving along an interior chord line, while his opponent on the opposite side was compelled to go round the outside of the curve. Thus, his route would be shorter than that of Poros.

Having made up his mind to cross the river at that point, Alexander carefully planned his movements. Among his officers, one Attlos quite resembled him in size, shape and features and could be easily mistaken for him. He deputed him to stay in the camp with troops, show himself up prominently and make a demonstration of guarding the bank without any intention of crossing the river. He also authorized him to wear the royal mantle, live in the royal tent with the guard of honour posted before it and the pageantry of royal state fully paraded. This lulled Poros on the opposite side into believing that really Alexander with his army was in front of him. He asked Krateros, with whom were the battalions of Polyperchon and Alketas and the Arachosian and Parapamisadan horsemen and the contingent of 5000 Indian soldiers, to remain on that side till he had crossed the river and engaged the elephants of Poros who were a menace for the horses. He also strung out the battalion of Meleager at a point half-way between the camp and the place of embarkation and placed that of Gorgias with the mercenary cavalry and infantry at another similar point. He ordered them to break up in detachments and cross over to the other

side as soon as the armies were fairly engaged in battle. He then selected the corps of bodyguards, called companions, the regiments of cavalry under Hephaistion, Perdikkas and Demetrios, also the Bactrian, Sogdian and Scythian cavalry and the Daan horse-archers, and from the phalanx, the hypaspists, the brigade of Kleitos and Koinos, and the archers and the Agrianians and took them with him. He did not keep close to the bank, but moved at a considerable distance from it so that he might not be seen marching towards the bend and the bluff. Thus, the presence of troops at different parts of the bank and the constant moves and shouts of soldiers and the burning of fires for many nights created the impression in the minds of the lines of the sentinels of Poros on the opposite bank that the Greek army was sticking to its positions along the bank and making no effort to cross the river.

One night a storm was blowing; heavens were thundering and lightning flashing and shooting. Rain was pouring in torrents and a biting blizzard howling and whistling. Hills and woods were echoing and the earth was plashy and slippery. In that dark and dismal hour, the daring leader of the Macedonians ordered his troops to cross the roaring river. The din of thunder and howl of the tempest drowned the rattle of the arms and the noise of the army, and concealed the design of Alexander from the opposite troops. When the storm ceased, a pall of pitched darkness muffled the face of the sky and made sight inoperative. Thus, the frightful wrath of nature and the indomitable courage of Alexander enabled him to baffle the vigils of his rivals and steal a march over them.

Most of the boats, which had been cut into sections, were assembled and hidden away in the woods. The skins were puffed and carefully sewn. With this paraphernalia, the Greek troops began the crossing. Alexander himself embarked on a thirty-oared galley and his generals followed him. Touching the land Alexander was the first to get down and taking the horsemen who had been conveyed over in his own and the other thirty-oared galleys, he at once formed them into line

as they kept landing. However, owing to his ignorance of the locality, he had landed unawares not on the mainland, but upon an island, the great size of which prevented it from being recognized as such. It was separated from the mainland by a branch of the river in which the water was shallow; but the violent storm of rain, which had lasted most of the night, has so swollen the stream that the horsemen could not find the ford and sank into the water with only the heads of the horses above it and the infantrymen were immersed up to the breasts. The torrent was so swift that it was difficult to balance oneself on the craggy and slippery bottom of the river. In that terrible situation many lost heart and Alexander himself exclaimed, "O Athenians ! can you believe what dangers I undergo to earn your applause". At last, of course with many losses and casualties, the Greek army succeeded in crossing the channel, which is called Alexander's stream after his name, and reached the other side of the river.

Alexander had landed on the domain of Poros in what is known as the Karri plain. It is girdled by low hills on the north and east and is at its widest part about five miles broad, affording a sufficient, though not excessive, space for the battle. The villages of Sirwal, Pakral and Sukhchainpur mark the site of the ancient battle-field. Near the latter place lay the town of Nikaia founded by Alexander to commemorate his victory,

After crossing, Alexander made quick dispositions and arrangements of his army and himself rode forward about twenty stadia in advance of the infantry. Just as his armies were crossing and cleaning and straightening themselves, a reconnaissance party, led by a son of Poros, arrived and pounced upon them. Aristoboulos says that it consisted of 60 chariots, but Ptolemy thinks that it comprised 120 chariots and 2000 men. Arrian agrees with the latter view, but cites old authorities to show that the contest between the men of Poros and the landing Greeks was very keen. "Other writers say", he observes, "that while the troops were landing, an encounter took place between the Indians, who had come with the son of

Poros, and Alexander, at the head of his cavalry, and that, as the son of Poros had come with a superior force, Alexander himself was wounded by the Indian prince, and that his famous horse Boukephalas was killed, having been wounded, like his master, by the son of Poros." R.C. Majumdar says that Arrian did not believe in the said account, but agreed with that of Ptolemy, which he quoted thereafter. But a perusal of Arrian's further narrative shows that he quotes Ptolemy only to state that Poros sent off his son not in command of merely 60 chariots but at the head of 2000 men and 120 chariots, that Alexander had made the final passage before the prince appeared on the scene and that Alexander sent against him first the horse-archers and later briskly charged him himself. Ptolemy does not deny that Alexander was wounded and his horse Boukephalas was killed in that skirmish. Accordingly, Arrian also does not rebut these facts. On the other hand, Justin lends colour to them by remarking that "Alexander lost no time in joining battle, but his horse being wounded at the first charge, he fell headlong to the ground, and was saved by his attendants who hastened up to his assistance". Eventually, the attack of the son of Poros failed and he fell, because his chariots stuck in the mud and, not distinguishing the land from the river, plunged into it.

Whether the force under the son af Poros was a reconnoitering party, which accidentally hit upon the Greek army in the act of, or soon after, landing, cannot be exactly determined, but there seems to be some truth in the view of A.E. Anspach that the son of Poros was already near the spot when Alexander landed and that finding a larger body than he could engage with, he sent for help to Spitaces who was holding a post opposite Meleager and brought 60 chariots and 1000 horses. Curtius expressly says that when Poros was first informed of the landing of Alexander, he did not believe in it, since he was seeing the Greek force with full royal paraphernalia on the bank opposite his position, and rather thought that his ally, the king of Abhisāra, was coming with his army for his help, as had been agreed upon. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to

hold that he sent his son Poros to a distance of about seventeen miles to check Alexander with a small force on learning of his landing. Even the force, mentioned by Ptolemy, would have been insufficient for that purpose. If he really meant business, he must have despatched a much larger contingent, for there could be no better opportunity to overcome the enemy than at the time when they were emerging from the river wet and exhausted. However, the fact remains that, soon after landing, Alexander had to encounter the attack of a contingent of the army of Poros and was for a time flabbergasted by it.

The news of the landing flashed like lightning. Curtius says that when the sky had become clearer and showed the ranks to be those of the enemy, Poros sent 100 chariots and 4,000 horse under the command of his brother Hages to obstruct their advance. Alexander ordered the Scythians and the Dahae to attack this force and then launched Perdikkas and his horse upon its right wing. To quote Curtius, "the fighting had now become hot everywhere when the drivers of the chariots rode at full speed into the midst of the battle, thinking they could thus most effectively succour their friends. It would be hard to say which side suffered most from this charge, for the Macedonian foot-soldiers, who were exposed to the first shock of the onset, were trampled down, while the charioteers were hurled from their seats, when the chariots, in rushing into action, jolted over broken and slippery ground. Some again of the horses took fright and precipitated the carriages not only into the sloughs and pools of water, but even into the river itself".

Meanwhile, Poros was busy arraying his troops in battle order. He left some of his army (four or five hundred men and thirty-five elephants) at the opposite position of Krateros to keep an eye on his movements and led the rest to a flat field where the ground was less plashy and undulated. According to Arrian, he took with him 4,000 horse, 300 chariots, 200 elephants and 30,000 foot. Diodoros increases the number of chariots to 1,000 and foot to 50,000, but reduces that of the

elephants to 130. Plutarch says that the army of Poros amounted only to 20,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry. Curtius states that Poros posted 85 elephants in front of his line. According to Arrian, they were placed at the intervals of 33⅓ yards and, according to Polyainos, of 50 yards. Behind them was drawn the infantry in a compact line, which protruded to fill the gaps between the huge beasts. With it were the drummers and trumpeters who played frightening music. Tarn thinks that the elephants covered the infantry only in the centre; on the left the infantry extended far enough beyond the elephants. At each end of the array he posted his cavalry and in front of it his chariots. In front of the army the image of Viṣṇu or Gaṇeśa, identified as Hercules by the Greeks, was carried as an emblem of war. Thus the Indian column looked like the rampart of a vast fort, with the elephants in the centre appearing as towers and the cavalry and the chariots at the ends acting as bastions. The structural massiveness of this array made the Macedonians pause and think for a while. As Curtius writes:

> "The sight not only of the huge beasts, but even of Poros himself, made the Macedonians pause for a time, for the beasts, which had been placed at intervals between the armed ranks, presented, when seen from a distance, the appearance of towers, and Poros himself not only surpassed the standard of height to which we conceive the human figure to be limited, but, besides this, the elephant, on which he was mounted, seemed to add to his proportions, for it towered over all the other elephants even as Poros himself stood taller than other men. Hence Alexander after attentively viewing the king and the army of the Indians, remarked to those near him, 'I see at last a danger that matches my courage. It is at once with wild beasts and men of uncommon mettle that the contest now lies."

Alexander adopted a simple and handy plan of operations. His battle line was very much like that of Issos and Gaugamela: from right to left, first Alexander's own cavalry, then the

hypaspists, then the phalanx with the light armed troops on either flank. The only difference between the array on the Jhelum and those on earlier occasions was that in it the cavalry was massed on the right. It was divided into two units, one under his own command and the other under Koinos. Droysen, Thirwall and Moberly think that Koinos was ordered to station himself opposite the enemy's right and Köchly and Rustow point out that Koinos was placed at the extreme right wing of the Greek forces, but Tarn holds that Koinos was ordered to move away from Alexander leftward so that Poros might suppose that he was going to support the horse archers. When the cavalry of Poros should advance to repel the horse archers as well as Koinos, he was to swing suddenly to the right and take the Indians in the rear. The command of the phalanx of infantry was given to Seleucos, Antigenes and Tauron and they were ordered not to take part in the action till they saw that the infantry and cavalry of Poros were thrown into disorder by the cavalry charge led by him.

Justin writes that Poros demanded from the Macedonians their king as if he was his personal enemy. Not heeding these overtures, Alexander ordered the charge and an advance squadron of one thousand mounted archers made a piercing attack on the left wing of Poros which must have extended close to the bank of the river. He himself marched rapidly forward with the companion cavalry against the left wing of Poros, when they were still in column and before they could deploy into line. Koinos also, as Curtius says, threw his cavalry with great fury on the left wing. Before this massive cavalry attack the chariots gave way. They were too heavy and unwieldy to move speedily in that muddy and plashy ground. But the cavalry assembled from all quarters, left and right, and rode forth to repel the enemy onslaught. Just then, according to the plan, Koinos swung to the right and attacked the Indian cavalry on the rear. Caught between the two attacks, it hastily broke into two sections, one facing the attack in the front and the other resisting the charge in the rear. As the horsemen were busy changing their lines and positions, Alexander fell upon them from the front and Koinos severely battered them on the rear. This put them on the defensive and, flying along the front of their own infantry, they took refuge in the spaces left between every two elephants, and passed as soon as possible through the intervals of the foot regiments, so as to be for the moment quite outside the battle. The first act of the drama was over.

Seeing the Greek cavalry in full fury of charge, the elephants of Poros advanced forward trampling and trumpeting and frightening the horses and neutralizing their onslaught. As the drivers goaded the furious beasts towards the enemy, the infantry followed closely behind them, and the cavalry again wheeled round from the rear and charged the opposite lines. From the other side also the phalanx advanced in a compact mass, since the horses were unable to cope with the elephant charge, whereas the cavalry again drove the horsemen of Poros behind the elephant lines. But the elephants went crushing and killing and spreading havoc and terror, whereas the infantry, closely following them, took full advantage of the disorder and dealt smashing blows at the enemy. As Arrian says, "this kind of warfare was different from any of which the Greeks had experience in former contests, for the huge beasts charged the ranks of the infantry, and wherever they turned, went crushing through the Macedonian phalanx, though in close formation". Curtius describes the scene as follows :

> "These animals inspired great terror and their strange dissonant cries frightened not only the horses, which shy at everything, but the men also, and disordered the ranks, so that those, who just before were victorious, began now to look round them for a place to which they could flee. Alexander thereupon despatched against the elephants the lightly-armed Agrianians and the Thracians, troops more serviceable in skirmishing then in close combat. They assailed the elephants and their drivers with a furious storm of missiles, and the phalanx, on seeing the resulting terror and confusion, steadily pressed forward. Some, however, by pursuing too eagerly, so irritated the animals with wounds that

they turned their rage upon them, and they were in consequence trampled to death under their feet, thus warning others to attack them with greater caution. The most dismal of all sights was when the elephants would, with their trunks, grasp the men, arms and all, and hoisting them above their heads, deliver them over into the hands of their drivers. Thus the battle was doubtful, the Macedonians sometimes pursuing and sometimes fleeing from the elephants, so that the struggle was prolonged till the day was far spent."

Diodoros gives the following description of the charge :

"Upon this the elephants, applying to good use their prodigious size and strength, killed some of the enemy by trampling them under their feet, and crushing their armour and their bones, while upon others they inflicted a terrible death, for they first lifted them aloft with their trunks, which they had twined round their bodies, and then dashed them down with great violence to the ground. Many others they deprived in a moment of life by goring them through and through with their tusks."

The menace of the elephants led some later writers to invent the myth of iron steeds which Alexander made to counteract their attack. Firdausi says :

"They lit the naphtha in the steeds;
Fur's troops were in dismay. The naphtha blazed;
Fur's troops recoiled, because those steeds were iron."

In the midst of this carnage, the Greeks also pestered the elephants in a variety of ways. They began to hack the feet of the beasts with axes, which they had prepared for the purpose, and aim chopper-like curved swords at their trunks. In the words of Diodoros, "they assailed the animals with a storm of javelins, thus piercing them with numerous wounds, which so tortured them that the Indians, mounted on their backs, lacked sufficient strength to control their movements, for the animals, on heading to their own ranks, bore against them with an impetuosity, not to be repressed, and trampled their own friends under their feet". Besides pestering the elephants, the Macedonians killed a good number of the soldiers of Poros with their long pikes. All this created a confusion in the ranks of Poros.

Even in confusion and disorder Poros did not lose the balance and presence of mind and with exemplary patience rallied round him forty elephants and personally led a dashing attack on the enemy. Let us hear it from Diodoros :

"Then ensued a great confusion, but Poros, who was mounted on the most powerful of all his elephants, on seeing what had happened, gathered around him forty of the animals, that were still under control, and falling upon the enemy with all the weight of the elephants, made a great slaughter with his own hand, for he far surpassed in bodily strength any soldier of his army. In stature he measured five cubits, while his girth was such that his breastplate was twice the size required for a man of ordinary bulk. For this reason, the javelins he flung from his hand flew with all but the impetus of shots from a catapult, the Macedonians, who stood opposed to him, being terror-struck at his astonishing prowess".

The elephant of Poros passed into the realm of legend. To quote Plutarch :

"This elephant showed wonderful sagacity and care for its royal master, for while it was still vigorous, it defended him against his assailants and repulsed them, but, when it perceived that it was ready to sink from the number of his wounds and bruises, fearing that he might fall off his back, it gently lowered itself to the ground, and, as it knelt, quietly extracted the darts from his body with its trunk."

As Poros was in the thick of the fight, darting his bolts incessantly and spreading destruction among the enemy, he was also the cynosure of all eyes and the mark of all shots. The archers and divisional light troops plied him with arrows. But he went on fighting with heroic courage, though he had

received nine wounds before and after, as Curtius says, or a wound in the right shoulder, which was the only place where he did not wear armour, as Arrian remarks. When he began to feel exhausted, the driver of his elephant gently turned him back. Alexander pursued him, but as Curtius writes, "his horse being pierced with many wounds fainted under him and sank to the ground, laying the king down gently rather than throwing him from his seat." Thus both these leaders were in difficulty. Meanwhile, the armies fought on closely with varying vicissitudes. The contest, which began early in the morning, was so obstinately maintained that it went on till the eighth hour of the day.

Arrian describes its last phases as follows :-

> "Meanwhile, the whole of Alexander's cavalry had now been gathered into one battalion, not in consequence of an order, but from being thrown together in the course of the struggle, and wherever they fell upon the ranks of the Indians, they made great carnage before parting from them. The elephants being now cooped up within a narrow space, did no less damage to their friends than to their foes, trampling them under their hoofs, as they wheeled and pushed about. There resulted in consequence a great slaughter of the cavalry, cooped up as it was in a narrow space around the elephants. Many of the elephant drivers, moreover, had been shot down, and of the elephants themselves some had been wounded, while others, both from exhaustion and the loss of their mahouts, no longer kept to their own side in the conflict, but, as if driven frantic by their sufferings, attacked friend and foe quite indiscriminately, pushed them, trampled them down, and killed them in all manner of ways. But the Macedonians, who had a wide and open field, and could, therefore, operate as they thought best, gave way, when the elephants charged, and, when they retreated, followed at their heels and plied them with darts; whereas the Indians, who were in the midst of the animals, suffered far more the effects of their rage. When the elephants, however, became quite exhausted, and their attacks were no longer made with vigour, they fell back like ships backing water, and merely kept trumpeting as they retreated with their faces to the enemy. Then did Alexander surround with his cavalry the whole of the enemy's line, and signal that the infantry, with their shields linked together so as to give the utmost compactness to their ranks, should advance in phalanx. By this means the cavalry of the Indians was, with a few exceptions, cut to pieces in the action. Such also was the fate of the infantry, since the Macedonians were now pressing upon them from every side. Upon this all turned to flight wherever a gap could be found in the cordon of Alexander's cavalry. Meanwhile Krateros and all the other officers of Alexander's army, who had been left behind on the opposite bank of the Hydaspes, crossed the river, when they perceived that Alexander was winning a splendid victory. These men, being fresh, were employed in the pursuit, instead of Alexander's exhausted troops, and they made no less a slaughter of the Indians in the retreat than had been made in the engagement."

Arrian has thrown the veil on the losses of Alexander as scholars like Tarn have demonstrated. The magnitude of these losses is clear from some other accounts which live on in many Asian and African traditions. For instance, the Ethiopic texts, as translated by Budge, give the following account of close of the battle :

> "Many of Alexander's horses were slain, and, by reason of this, there was such great sorrow among them that they wept and howled like dogs, and they wished to throw down the arms, which were in their hands, and to forsake Alexander and go over to the enemy. When Alexander saw this, he drew nigh into their midst, being himself in great tribulation, and he wished to stop the fight."

Joseph Ben Gorion in his *History of the Jews* recaptures the scene as follows :

> "Now the war between the Macedonians and the Indians was prolonged until a great number of Alexander's soldiers were destroyed and those (that remained) took counsel together to lay hold of Alexander and to deliver him over to the King of India."

Obviously, both sides suffered heavy losses so that at the end it was difficult to distinguish between victory and defeat. What the epilogue was we shall see in the next chapter.

IX

END OF THE BATTLE

When Poros was wounded in the right shoulder, and probably elsewhere also, his mahout turned the elephant aside from the field of battle. Did he flee from the battle ? Arrian writes that "he did not, after the manner of Darius, the great king, abandon the field and show his men the first example of flight, but, on the contrary, fought on as long as he saw any Indians maintaining the contest in a united body, but he wheeled round on being wounded". This shows that his turning was not a flight and the fighting did not cease with it, but continued in whatever stage it was. It is clear from the remarks of Arrian that he did not intend to give up resistance or come to terms with Alexander, when his mahout goaded his elephant aside from the battle-field. Let us consider the following passage :

> "Alexander, perceiving that he was a great man and valiant in fight, was anxious to save his life, and, for this purpose, sent to him first of all Taxiles, the Indian. Taxiles, who was on horseback, approached as near the elephant, which carried Poros, as seemed safe, and entreated him, since it was no longer possible for him to flee, to stop his elephant and listen to the message he brought from Alexander. But, Poros, on finding that the speaker was his old enemy Taxiles, turned round and prepared to smite him with his javelin; and he would probably have killed him, had not Taxiles instantly put his horse to the gallop and got beyond the reach of Poros. But not even for this act did Alexander feel any resentment against Poros, but sent to him messenger after messanger, and last of all Meroes, an Indian, as he had learned that Poros and this Meroes were old

friends. As soon as Poros heard themassage, which Meroes now brought, just at a time, when he was overpowered by thirst, he made his elephant halt and dismounted. Then, when he had taken a draught of water and felt revived, he requested Meroes to conduct him without delay to Alexander. He was then conducted to Alexander, who, on learning that Meroes was approaching with him, rode forward in front of his line with a few of the companions to meet him. Then, reining in his horse, he beheld with admiration the handsome person and majestic stature of Poros, which somewhat exceeded five cubits. He saw, too, with wonder that he did not seem to be broken and abased in spirit, but that he advanced to meet him as a brave man would meet another brave man after gallantly contending with another king in defence of his kingdom. Then Alexander, who was the first to speak, requested Poros to say how he wished to be treated. The report goes that Poros said in reply, 'Treat me, O Alexander, as befits a king ; ' and that Alexander, being pleased with his answer, replied, 'For mine own sake, O Poros, thou shalt be so treated, but do thou, in thine own behalf, ask for whatever boon thou pleasest,' to which Poros replied that in what he had asked everything was included. Alexander was more delighted than ever with this rejoinder, and not only appointed Poros to govern his own Indians, but added to his original territory another of still greater extent."

This account clearly brings out the following points :

(1) Alexander was keenly desirous of contacting Poros and, for that purpose, first sent to him Taxiles, then messenger after messenger, and lastly Meroes, thinking that his friendship would make Poros return and meet him.

(2) Poros was not at all willing to listen to the overtures of Alexander and return to meet him and gave a sharp rebuff to Taxiles and his other messengers.

(3) Meroes succeeded in bringing him round to his point of view and persuading him to meet Alexander by reason of his old friendship rather than the cajolry of Alexander much less his threat or ultimatum.

(4) When, softened by the persuasive advocacy of his friend Meroes, Poros approached Alexander, he was "not broken and abased in spirit".

(5) Poros met Alexander on a footing of equality, "as a brave man would meet another brave man after gallantly contending in defence of his kingdom," without any inkling of defeat.

(6) Alexander gave vent to his solicitude for good terms with Poros by accosting him first and asking him the way he wanted to be treated ; Poros did not salute him nor paid any respect to him nor offered any obeisance to him.

(7) On meeting Alexander and being addressed by him, Poros did not cringe like a vassal or crawl like a prisoner or grovel in the dust like a defeated person, but insisted on being treated as a *King* implying that he was zealous for his sovereignty and conscious of his royal status.

(8) Alexander not only let him govern his kingdom but also added "another territory of still greater extent" to it, which clearly suggests that he ceded it to him.

Thus, it appears from Arrian's narrative that Alexander took the initiative in opening talks with Poros and showed so much perseverence in it as to send messenger after messenger to him for that purpose, that Poros was reluctant to have any truck with Alexander and again and again rebuffed and repelled his envoys and emissaries, that, ultimately, through the instrumentality of an old friend, he agreed to meet Alexander and zealously preserved his dignity and status in his talk with him and that the outcome of the peace parleys was an

enlargement of the kingdom of Poros by the surrender of a large chunk of territory by Alexander.

Let us now consider Curtius's account of the end of the battle which is as follows :

> "Alexander pursued (Poros), but his horse, being pierced with many wounds, fainted under him and sank to the ground, laying the king down gently rather than throwing him from his seat. The necessity of changing his horse retarded, of course, his pursuit. In the meantime, the brother of Taxiles, the Indian King, whom Alexander had sent on before, advised Poros not to persist in holding out to the last extremity, but to surrender himself to the conqueror. Poros, however, though his strength was exhausted and his blood nearly spent, yet roused himself at the well-known voice and said, 'I recognize the brother of Taxiles who gave up his throne and kingdom'. Therewith, he flung at him the one dart that had not slipped from his grasp, and flung it too with such force that it pierced right through his back to the chest. Having roused himself to this last act of valour, he began to flee faster than before, but his elephant, which had by this time received many wounds, was now, like himself, quite exhausted, so that he stopped the flight, and made head against the pursuers with his remaining army. Alexander had now come up, and, knowing how obstinate Poros was, forbade quarter to be given to those who resisted. The infantry, therefore, and Poros himself, were assailed with darts from all points, and as he could no longer bear up against them, he began slip from his elephant. The Indian driver, thinking the king wished to alight, made the elephant kneel down in the usual manner. On seeing this, the other elephants also knelt down, for they had been trained to lower themselves when the royal elephant did so.

> Poros and his men were thus placed entirely at the mercy of the conqueror. Alexander, supposing that he was dead, ordered his body to be stripped, and men then ran forward to take off his breastplate and robes, when the elephant turned upon them in defence of its master and lifting him up placed him once more on its back. Upon this the animal was on all sides overwhelmed with darts, and when it was stabbed to death, Poros was placed on a wagon. But the King, perceiving him to lift up his eyes, forgot all animosity, and being deeply moved with pity, said to him, 'What the plague ! what madness induced you to try the fortune of war with me of whose exploits you have heard the fame, especially when in Taxiles you had a near example of my clemency to those who submit to me?' He answered thus: 'Since you propose a question, I shall answer with the freedom which you grant by asking it. I used to think there was no one braver than myself, for I knew my own strength, but had not yet experienced thine. The result of the war has taught me that you are a braver man, but even in ranking next to you, I consider myself to be highly fortunate.' Being asked again how he thought the victor should treat him, 'in accordance,' he replied, 'with the lesson this day teaches—a day in which you have witnessed how readily prosperity can be blasted.' By giving this admonition, he gained more than if he had resorted to entreaty, for Alexander, in consideration of the greatness of his courage, which scorned all fear, and which adversity could not break down, extended pity to his misfortunes and honour to his merits. He ordered his wounds to be as carefully attended to as if he had fought in his service, and when he had recovered strength, he admitted him into the number of his friends, and soon after

presented him with a larger kingdom than that which he had."

This account of Curtius differs from that of Arrian on many important points :

(1) According to Curtius, when Poros retired from the battlefield on being wounded, Alexander himself pursued him, but failed due to the fall of his horse. Arrian does not give any such information.

(2) Curtius says that, before starting the pursuit of Poros himself, Alexander sent the brother of Taxiles to him with a call to surrender, but he threw a javelin at him and pierced his body. Arrian is silent on this point and rather says that Alexander sent Taxiles himself to Poros with a message and that the latter aimed a dart at him, but he galloped off to safety.

(3) Curtius writes that, on the death of the brother of Taxiles, the Greek army fell upon the troops of Poros with great vigour and Alexander ordered that no quarter be given to those who resisted. In the engagement, that followed, the soldiers of Poros suffered severely and he himself received grievous injuries which created the impression that he was dead. Thereupon his driver made his elephant kneel down and other elephants followed suit. Alexander ordered the body of Poros to be stripped, but, as men advanced to remove his breastplate, his elephant defended him and again raised him aloft to his back. Seeing this, the Greeks assaulted the elephant on all sides and killed him. Poros was also brought down and placed on a wagon. Arrian gives no such account and merely says that, on the failure of the missions of many emissaries, Alexander sent an old friend of Poros, named Meroes, to persuade him to come to him, and when, by dint of his friendship, he prevailed on Poros to meet the Macedonian, the latter advanced to talk to him and was the first to speak.

(4) Curtius's account of the conversation of Alexander and Poros is quite different from that given by Arrian.

Inspite of the aforesaid discrepancies between his account and that of Arrian, Curtius makes it clear that the turning of the elephant of Poros from the battlefield was not the end-all of the fighting, but that it continued even after that. He also agrees with Arrian that Poros was obstinate in his resistance unto the last and corroborates his statement that Alexander made Poros his friend at the end and enlarged his kingdom by adding territories to it.

Diodoros gives another version of the incident which contradicts that of Curtius on many key-points. He observes as follows :

> "Poros fought on with heroic courage, but being drained of blood by the number of the wounds, he fainted away, and leaning on his elephant for support, was borne to the ground. A report having spread that their king was dead, the remnant of the Indian host fled from the field, but many of them were slain in the flight. Alexander, having gained this splendid victory, recalled his soldiers from the field by sound of trumpet..............Poros himself, who was still alive, was given into the hands of the Indians to be cured of his wounds...........He then appointed Poros, who had recovered from his wounds, in consideration of the valour he had displayed, to be king of the country over which he had formerly ruled."

In this account there is no reference to the turning of the elephant of Poros from the battlefield or his pursuit by Alexander or Taxiles or his brother or Meroes or any other envoy. There is also no information regarding the conversation of Alexander and Poros. Only this much is said that Poros was reported to be dead on which his army fled from the field and was killed in the flight. Then it is added that Poros was still alive and was given by Alexander to the Indians for

treatment. How he came to Alexander is not clear, but, from the preceding sentence that 9,000 men were imprisoned and 80 elephants captured, the suggestion follows that he was also one of the prisoners, but was returned to the Indians. However, the conclusion remains that Poros was given his former kingdom to rule, though no hint is made of making any addition to his territory. Thus this account fundamentally differs from those of both Arrian and Curtius.

Plutarch describes the close of the battle in the following words:

> "When Poros was taken prisoner, Alexander asked him how he wished to be treated. 'Like a king', answered Poros. When Alexander further asked if he had anything else to request, 'Everything', rejoined Poros, 'is comprised in the words, 'like a king'. Alexander then not only reinstated Poros in his kingdom with the title of *satrap*, but added a large province to it, subduing the inhabitants whose form of government was the republican."

In this account Plutarch assembles some fragments from Diodoros and others from Arrian without any regard for consistency. Like Diodoros, he says that Poros was taken prisoner, and, like Arrian, he remarks that he insisted on being treated not as a prisoner but as a king. How a prisoner can claim to be treated as a king does not bother him. His note that Poros was appointed a satrap is not borne out by the other three historians whose accounts we have examined above and who simply say that Poros was reinstated in his kingdom.

Justin has quite a fresh story to tell :

> "Poros again, when fainting from the number of his wounds, was taken prisoner. His defeat he took so much to heart that, when he had received quarter from the victor, he neither wished to take food nor would allow his wounds to be attended to and, indeed, would scarcely be induced to wish for life. Alexander, out of respect for his valour, restored him in safety to his sovereignty."

Here the suggestion is that, on being imprisoned, Poros offered a sort of *satyāgraha* or hunger-strike and did not take any food or medicine inspite of persuasion and inducement and this produced such an impression on the mind of Alexander that, out of respect for his valour, he restored him in safety to his sovereignty. Where arms could not succeed, hunger-strike delivered the goods ! a glorious instance of non-violent non-cooperation !!

The foregoing discussion makes it plain that the five Western historians, who wrote the histories of the war of Alexander and Poros, are not in full agreement on any fundamental aspect of its end. Their accounts are inconsistent, discrepant and contradictory. They count so much on the credulity of the readers and belittle their critical sense to such an extent that they attribute the chivalrous conduct of Alexander towards Poros simply to his appreciation of valour. But, while doing so, they entirely ignore the nature of Alexander as can be gathered from his earlier conduct. They forget that Alexander got Bessos tried before a council at Zariaspa and ordered him to be whipped, mutilated and executed, he flung a lance at Kleitos, who was the brother of his nurse and the saviour of his life in the battle of the Granikos, simply because he praised his father Philip on an occasion, he got his most trusted generals Parmenion and his son to be put to death on the basis of a flimsy rumour of conspiracy, he imprisoned and tortured to death Kallisthenes, the nephew of his preceptor Aristotle, because he made an unsavoury comment on his adoption of oriental manners, he made a wholesale massacre of the fugitives from Massaga, whom he had himself promised shelter and safety, in the dead of night, about which Plutarch wrote that "it rests as a foul blot on his martial fame", he put innocent men, women and children to death in course of his march through lower Panjab and Sind, and he burnt Persepolis and destroyed many cities of his defeated enemies like Sangala. They omit to think that the defenders of Massaga and the Mālavas of Multan were as sturdy and stalwart as Poros and

his soldiers, and, if physical fitness and patriotric sentiment and indefatigable spirit were the main objects of appreciation in the eyes of Alexander and the main grounds of his clemency and friendship, why these people, who possessed them no less than Poros, were not spared and befriended. In fact, history affords no instance of a victor opening parleys of peace with the vanquished acknowledging his sovereignty and ceding his own territory to him in the stirring moment of triumph. Such thing not only sounds strange, but also appears incredible.

Oriental and African traditions also throw some light on how the battle came to a close. The Ethiopic version of the *Pseudo-Kallisthenes* states that many of Alexander's horses were slain and there was so much sorrow among his soldiers that they wept and howled like dogs and wished to throw down the arms and to forsake Alexander and go over to the enemy. "When Alexander saw this, he drew nigh into their midst, being himself in great tribulation and he wished to stop the fight. And, having commanded the soldiers to cease fighting, he cried out saying, 'O Poros, King of India, behold, I perceive and know thy strength and might, and, moreover, what thou doest lieth hard upon me, and my heart is weary; and I have considered the fatigue whereby we are all perishing. Now, although I may wish to destroy my own life, I would not that these men (who are with me) should perish, for it is I who have brought them nigh upto death here, and it is not a right thing for a king to deliver his soldiers unto death and to save his own life. Now I would that we command our armies to cease fighting for a little and that we two go down and do battle with each other."

Joseph Ben Gorion in his *History of the Jews* gives the following information :

> "And when Alexander knew this thing (the distress of his army), he sent message to the King of India, saying, 'Behold, the war between us hath been prolonged and many of our men have perished, let us two leave our armies behind us and meet in combat with each other.'

Firdausi in his *Shāh-nāmā* says that when the intensity of the war reached a high pitch, Alexander addressed Poros as follows :

> "O! noble man :
> Our two hosts have been shattered by the fight,
> The wild beasts batten on the brains of men,
> The horses' hoofs are trampling on their bones,
> Now both of us are heroes, brave and young,
> Both paladins of eloquence and brain,
> Why then slaughter be the soldier's lot
> Or bare survival after combating."

These accounts relate that the losses on the side of Alexander were heavy, compelling him to make the overtures of a cease-fire. That this part of the account is correct is demonstrated by Tarn according to whom Greek historians have thrown the veil on the losses of Alexander. But these accounts border on confusion in regard to the duel of Alexander and Poros and the death of the latter. We have seen that two sons of Poros fell on the battle-field. They were also known by the name of Poros. It may well be that the death of one of the sons of Poros was made the basis of the legend of the duel and death of the elder Poros at the hands of Alexander. That the aforesaid accounts are legendary admits of no doubt, but their version of why and how Alexander opened the talks of peace with Poros accords well with the data furnished by Arrian and others and as such deserves some consideration.

The upshot of the above discussion is that, as the eighth hour of the battle was in progress, and, to quote Plutarch, "the battle depressed the spirits of the Macedonians," Alexander clamoured for peace and for that purpose sent numerous envoys and messengers to Poros. Poros was adamant on his determination to shun contact with his adversary and reluctant to meet him for any talk, inspite of the severe losses he had sustained, partly, on account of the superior cavalry and arms of Alexander and, partly, by reason of bad weather

and plashy or slippery terrain which must have rendered his chariots infructuous and made the job of his bowmen, who installed their long bows on the earth and pressed them with their feet for mounting and discharging the arrows, fairly tough. Ultimately, a messenger, named Meroes, brought his friendship to bear on Poros and thereby convinced him of the futility of further fighting and advisability of coming to terms with Alexander. How he argued with Poros we cannot say, but it may be imagined that he advised him to make friends with Alexander and utilise him and his armies for reducing the tribes and peoples of the Panjab whom he could not conquer earlier inspite of his strenuous endeavour. It is also not unlikely that he may have held out the prospect of the conqüest of the Gangetic Valley and the empire of Magadha and the acquisition of the sovereignty of North India before him. In any case, by argument and promise, he persuaded Poros to meet Alexander assuring him fully of his safety and the preservation of his royal dignity and status. Hence, when Poros approached Alexander with Meroes, he did it as a king and what he demanded of him was treatment as a king. Arrian makes it plain that Alexander reciprocated his gesture and expressed his readiness to treat him as a king with full implications that this word had. Thus the meeting of Poros and Alexander was a meeting of a king with a king and not that of a vassal with an overlord much less that of a prisoner with his captor. The condition of the meeting was indeed the maintenance of the sovereignty of Poros, but the outcome of it, in fact, was the addition of territory to his kingdom and, eventually, his complete mastery over the Panjab north and west of the Beas.

Thus we see that the battle of the Jhelum ended in a treaty of peace between Poros and Alexander, the essence of which was the preservation of the royal dignity of Poros, the cession of the territory conquered by Alexander to him and the joint endeavour of both of them in reducing the independent tribes of the Panjab and also to advance on Magadha, if possible. This peace was made when fighting was still

continuing, inspite of the severe losses suffered by both the parties. This fact blinks out of the veil that Greek writers tried to throw over it by putting up the incredible case that Alexander's chivalrous treatment of Poros was only due to his appreciation of valour. Arrian's account, discussed above, leaves no room for doubt that Alexander was the first to send the message of peace to Poros and persisted in his efforts to bring it home to him despite his stubborn reluctance and even provocative rejection of his offer. This he could only do under compelling circumstances, especially, the apprehension of more severe losses at the hands of Poros than he had sustained by that time and the distress and discomfiture prevailing in his troops. Though the mahout of Poros was taking him aside from the battle-field, he had obviously no intention of giving up the struggle and ending the hostilities, for, otherwise, why he should have shown so much obduracy in refusing to listen to the message of Alexander which was being carried to him by messenger after messenger. But, eventually, while fighting still raged, the friendly pleading of Meroes made him change his attitude and come to terms with Alexander on the field of battle. Thus both the belligerents considered discretion to be the better part of valour and ultimately patched up an honourable peace, since they had suffered heavy losses and could have suffered even more, had they persisted in fighting to the finish. Alexander was a victor in the sense that he could bring round Poros to his point of view and, in stead of igno minously fleeing from the Jhelum, could triumphantly advance up to the Beas and then successfully descend through lower Panjab and Sind back to Babylonia. Poros was a victor in the sense that he could maintain his royal dignity and status as a king and got an enlarged kingdom to rule and used Alexander as a cat's paw to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for him by making him a tool of the conquest of the Panjab. Both of them had their own views of the engagement and the final arrangement, of which the Greek version hassurvived, though in garbled and contradictory editions, and the Indian version has passed into the mists of in difference and oblivion.

X

CONQUEST OF THE PANJAB

When two belligerents fight, truth is the first casualty. Their respective accounts of the encounter are coloured by their own images and notions and emphasize their own strong points at the cost of those of the other side. Yet falsehood has always some loopholes through which streaks of light shoot up to give an inkling of what actually happened. This is exactly the case of the Greek versions of the battle of the Jhelum, as seen before. The fact that they are inconsistent, conflicting and contradictory shows that there is something wrong somewhere in them which robs them, of their coherence. On comparing and contrasting them, some glimpses of truth blink out here and there, which show that things really were not such as they tried to present them. The battle of the Jhelum was a drawn game and resulted in a treaty of peace between Alexander and Poros. In stead of foes, they became friends and collaborators in the task of subjugating the states and tribes of the Panjab.

After a stay of thirty days in the kingdom of Poros, Alexander moved against a people called Glaukanikoi or Glausai, probably Glaucukāyana, and took possession of seventy-three cities, the smallest of which contained not fewer than 5,000 inhabitants, while many contained upwards of 10,000, and numerous villages teeming with population belonging to them and gave them all to Poros to rule. At that time, Abhisares also realised the futility of his policy of shilly-shallying and sent his brother with monetary presents and forty elephants to Alexander. But Alexander insisted on his personal attendance and ordered him to come as quickly as possible, "threatening that, if he did not come, he would see him and his army arriving where he would not rejoice to see them." Curtius says that Abhisares also insisted on the maintenance of his kingly dignity and status, while suing for peace, and demurred to call upon Alexander in

person. But "Alexander bade them tell their master if he grudged to come to Alexander, Alexander would go to him". Diodoros adds that "having struck terror into the king called Embisaros, he compelled him to do what he commanded".

Meanwhile, envoys from the younger Poros, the nephew of the elder Poros, who ruled between the Chenab and the Ravi, also reached Alexander, but since he had antagonized his uncle, there could be no truck with him. He also was overcome with fear "not so much of Alexander as of his namesake Poros and fled from his country taking with him as many fighting men as he could persuade to accompany him in his flight", as Arrian observes. Alexander gave him a hot chase, but he had repaired probably to the kingdom of the Nandas and was beyond the reach of Alexander and Poros.

Poros accompanied Alexander up to the Chenab, but the latter "sent him home to his capital with orders to select the best fighting men of the Indians, and to muster all the elephants he possessed, and to rejoin him with these". Crossing the Chenab, some thirty miles or so above Wazirabad, Alexander moved to the east keeping close to the mountains, as Strabo states. His army must have passed close to Sialkot and Gurdaspur moving along the present frontier of the Jammu and Kashmir State. "Over all the country, which he overran, writes Arrian, "he planted garrisons in the most suitable places, so that the troops under Krateros (whom he left at the capital of Poros) and Koinos (whom he left on the Chenab) might, while scouring it far and near for forage, traverse it in safety to join him." He then despatched Hephaistion with a force comprising two divisions of infantry, his own regiment of cavalry and that of Demetrios and one half of the archers into the country of the younger Poros. "He received orders to hand over the country to the other Poros (elder Poros), and when he had reduced all the independent Indian tribes, bordering on the banks of the Hydraotes, to place these also under the rule of Poros." Thus Poros became the undisputed master of the region between the Jhelum and the Ravi.

On the left side of the Ravi, the Adraistai (Ārattas, modern

Aroḍās) surrendered their city Pimprama to Alexander, but the Kathaians (Kaṭhas) had prepared to accord a warlike welcome to him at their stronghold of Sangala, somewhere in the Gurdaspur district. On the third day of his crossing the Ravi, he advanced on Sangala where the Kathaians and their allies "lay encamped behind their wagons, which, by encircling the hill in three row, protected the camp with a triple barricade". Alexander's cavalry launched the attack, but the Kathaians began to shoot from the top of the wagons and drove the cavalry back. Perceiving the discomfiture of the cavalry, Alexander led the phalanx of the infantry against them and dislodged them from the first row of wagons. But the Kathaians formed compact line in front of the second line of wagons and pushed the assailants back with greater ease. But the Greek infantrymen advanced in an irregular way through the gaps in the carts and repelled the Kathaians from the second and third rows forcing them to retire inside the citadel which Alexander invested with his troops. Near a gap in the citadel was a lake which afforded the avenue of escape, but Alexander guarded it well, and, when the Kathaians tried to escape out in the night, foiled their attempt with great slaughter and drove them back to the city. Meanwhile, Poros also arrived, "bringing with him the remainder of his elephants and a force of 5,000 Indians". The military engines, which had been constructed by Alexander, were then brought up to the wall. But, before the walls of the citadel were stormed, the Macedonians undermined the wall and planted ladders against it all round and plunged into the city and made a holocaust of the defenders, killing 17,000 and capturing 70,000. Hearing of the fate of Sangala, the people of two other cities, who had resolved to resist the invaders, fled and the Greek army pursued them, killing 500 fugitives. Alexander gave vent to his irritation by razing Sangala to the ground and thereby gave the lie to those who attributed his dignified treatment of Poros to his love of valour. "He then sent Poros with his own force to the cities, which had submitted, to introduce garrisons within them, but he himself with his army advanced

to the river Hyphasis to conquer the Indians who dwelt beyond it."

Now Alexander was on the Beas. The mighty river torrentially flowed before him and the discontent of his followers and armies also swelled like a surging flood. Koinos, the mouthpiece of the mutineers, challenging the order of Alexander to advance, drew a woeful picture of the predicament of the army. In the words of Curtius, he observed as follows :

> "See how bloodless be our bodies, pierced with how many wounds, and gashed with how many scars. Our weapons are now blunt, our armour quite worn out. We have been driven to assume the Persian garb, since that of our own country cannot be brought up to supply us. We have degenerated so far as to adopt a foreign costume. Among how many of us is there to be found a single coat of mail ? Which of us has a horse ? Cause it to be inquired how many have servants to follow them, how much of his booty each one has now left. We have conquered all the world, but are ourselves destitute of all things. Can you think of exposing such a noble army as this, all naked and defenceless, to the mercy of savage beasts, whose numbers, though purposely exaggerated by the barbarians, must yet, as I can gather from the lying report itself, be very considerable."

It is clear from the above account of the recalcitrance of the Greek army that it had suffered terribly during its march through upper Panjab. Though Greek writers strained every nerve to minimise its losses as much as possible and present its advance in as rosy colours as they could do, the fact remains that, by the time it reached the Beas, its soldiers were naked and defenceless, wounded and emaciated, without horse or armour or servants. Hence the report of the tremendous military potential of the Nandas sent a shudder through them and induced them to impugn the behest of their beloved leader. The report was that King Agrammes or Xandramas,

the Nanda King of Magadha, "kept in the field for guarding the approaches to his country 20,000 cavalry and 2,00,000 infantry, besides 2,000 four-horsed chariots and, what was the most formidable force of all, a troop of 3,000 elephants". Alexander was himself appalled at this news and could not easily believe it. He consulted Poros, who was with him on the Beas, about the correctness of the news. Poros could not contradict it, but emphasized that the Nanda King "was not merely a man originally of no distinction, but even of the very meanest condition". His idea was that, inspite of the military strength of the Nanda King, it was not difficult to defeat him because of his unpopularity among his subjects. This opinion was also shared by Sandrocottos or Androcottos, Chandragupta, who, in the words of Plutarch, held that "Alexander could easily have taken possession of the whole country, since the king was hated and despised by his subjects for the wickedness of his disposition and the meanness of his origin." In fact, both Poros and Chandragupta desired Alexander to advance on Magadha, because they wanted to use him as a tool for worsting the Nandas. But their inducements and the entreaties of Alexander failed to make any impression on the depressed and exhausted Greek army. In remorse and irritation, Alexander remained muffled in his tent for two days, but the army was bent upon flouting his orders, and ultimately compelled him to beat a retreat. Arrian says that "having thereafter committed all the country west of the river Hyphasis (Beas) to the gevernment of Poros, he marched back to the Hydraotes". From there he retreated to the Chenab where he had ordered a city to be built and thence repaired to the Jhelum. There, to quote Arrian, "he assembled the companions and all the ambassadors of the Indians, who had come to him, and, in their presence, appointed Poros king of all the Indian territories already subjugated, seven nations in all, containing more than 2,000 cities". Strabo gives the following version of this development: "Other writers affirm that the Macedonians conquered nine nations situated between the Hydaspes (Jhelum) and the Hypanis

(Beas), and obtained possession of 500 cities, not one of which was less than Kos Meropis, and that Alexander, after having conquered all this country, delivered it up to Poros." His differences with Taxiles also were by that time ironed out and converted into friendship sealed by some sort of matrimonial relationship. Thus Poros became the beneficiary of Alexander's campaign in the Panjab and the residuary legatee of his conquests in that region. The net result of Alexander's invasion was the fulfilment of the goal of establishing his paramount rule in the Panjab which Poros had set before himself much before his advance.

When Alexander was in the kingdom of Poros on the Hydaspes, there arrived from Greece under Memnon and Harpalus allies and mercenaries numbering more than 30,000 foot and not less than 6,000 cavalry. 25,000 splendid suits of armour were brought for the infantry and 100 talents of medicinal drugs for the sick and wounded. Being thus replenished, Alexander decided to go home, but this time through lower Panjab and Sind rather than the north-western highlands, probably because they were full of turbulent tribes which were up on their toes. 200 boats without hatches and 800 tenders were got ready. Alexander embarked on a galley, stood on the prow and poured libation into the water invoking the river gods as well as his ancestors. As the fleet advanced, the 1,20,000 troops and elephants marched along the banks and a large number of Indians, including Poros, Taxiles and others, saw the foreigners off amidst chants and songs.

The downward journey was quite risky and stormy. Mighty currents dashed against the ships and destroyed two of them exposing Alexander to the fury of the waters, and powerful tribes like the Kṣudraka-Mālavas lashed out at his armies and nearly robbed him of his life by piercing his breast with edged barbs. But, braving these risks and facing untoward dangers and spreading fire and destruction, killing, enslaving, looting and burning, the Greek hero went his way through lower Panjab and Sind. The country was placed under the satrapy of Philippos. But while Alexander was passing

through Karmania, the mercenaries made short shrift of this governor. Letters were issued to Taxiles and Eudamos to take charge of the territory, but the flood-gates of revolt were open and a mass-upsurge swept away the remnants of Greek rule. At the second partition of the empire at Triparadeisos in 321 B.C., the empire of India was simply written off, and, with the transfer of Peithon, the satrap of the Indus Delta, to Arachosia, Poros was recognized as the undisputed master of the Panjab to the east of the Jhelum. Mccrindle holds that after Alexander's death Poros had taken possession of the satrapy of the lower Indus.

XI

POROS AND CHANDRAGUPTA

Whatever nominal authority Alexander claimed in lower Panjab and Sind retreated with him like a shadow. The garrisons, left by him in the cantonments and settlements, founded at different places, were overwhelmed by a vast upsurge of people infuriated by the brutality of the invaders. The whole Panjab and the North-West was aflame and astir with the hatred for the foreigners. The breaking of regional frontiers and the annihilation of tribal mentality removed isolationist tendencies and brought the people to the platform of unity under imperial organization. Broken battalions, displaced mercenaries and scattered communities of soldiers swelled the surge of the patriotic movement which made a clean sweep of Greek influence. Led by infuriated Brāhmaṇa leaders and enchafed Kṣatriya scions, the movement coursed along channels of imperial unity, the lodestars of which were the gifted strategist Chāṇakya and the valiant prince Chandragupta Maurya.

Justin writes that after Alexander's death "India put his prefects to death, as if the yoke of servitude had been shaken off from its neck". He adds that "Sandrocottos (Chandragupta) was the leader who achieved their freedom", and, "having collected a band of robbers, he instigated the Indians to overthrow the existing government". Here robbers stand for *choras* of Pāli texts and *Āraṭṭas* of the *Mahābhārata*, who constituted the core of the *āyudhajīvī saṁghas* of the Panjab. But the question arises as to whether Chandragupta could launch any movement in the Panjab without the cooperation of Poros who emerged from the travail of Alexander's invasion as the paramount ruler of that region. As F.W. Thomas very pertinently observes, "it can hardly have been effected without the cooperation of the kingdom of Poros".

Indian traditions, pertaining to Chandragupta, are silent

about Poros, but assign a significant role to a king Parvataka or Parvateśvara in his career of conquest. Pāli texts like the *Vaṁsatthappakāsinī* and the *Mahāvaṁsa* of Moggallāna state that Chāṇakya approached Prince Pabbata (Parvata) for carrying out his designs. According to them, Pabbata (Parvata) and Chandragupta worked together under Chāṇakya, but finding the latter more competent than the former, he managed to do away with him. Jaina texts like the *Chūrṇī* and *Ṭīkā* of the *Āvaśyaka Niryukti*, the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* of Hemachandra, and the *Sukhabodhā* of Devendragaṇin *alias* Nemichandra Sūrī, based on them, relate that Chāṇakya brought about the conclusion of a treaty between Parvataka and Chandragupta in terms of which the kingdom of the Nandas was to be divided equally between them after its conquest. The *Mudrārākṣasa* of Viśākhadatta also refers to the collaboration of Parvateśvara and Chandragupta in the conquest of the kingdom of the Nandas and the arrangement of dividing it equally between them. Evidently this Parvata or Parvataka or Parvateśvara must have been a ruler of some consequence capable of effectively assisting Chāṇakya and Chandragupta in the arduous task of reducing the redoutable Nandas.

Hermann Jacobi identifies Parvata or Parvataka with Parva, *alias* Panchen, the eleventh king of the Kirāta dynasty of Nepal, mentioned in the *Buddhaparvatīya-vaṁśāvalī*, on the ground that, in the reign of the seventh king Jitedāsti, the Buddha visited Nepal, and, in that of the fourteenth king Sthunka, Aśoka also visited that country. About this view C.D. Chatterji pettinently obverses as follows : "While we do not question the historicity of Parva alias Panchen, the eleventh Kirāta king of Gokarṇa, it passes comprehension how an astute politician and strategist like Chāṇakya could count so much on the military assistance of a barbarous Mongoloid ruler of a hill state for overthrowing the last Nanda King, when the war-veterans of Alexander, who had brought under their heels the vast tract of Asia stretching from the Hellespont to the Hyphasis, wavered for want of confidence in their success against the most powerful Xandramas, King of the Prasioi and the

Gangaridai and ultimately retired almost from the frontier of his kingdom." In fact, as F.W. Thomas, R.K. Mookerjee and H.C. Seth have suggested, there is a very strong probability that Parvata or Parvataka or Parvateśvara stands for Poros. If we consider the political condition of northern India at the time of the departure of Alexander, we do not find any king except Poros who had the power and potential of challenging the mighty Nandas and on whose effective support Chandragupta and his shrewd preceptor Chāṇakya could count for overthrowing them. That Poros had a design on the throne of the Nandas is manifest from the remarks of Greek historians that he held them cheap and spoke disparagingly of them before Alexander on the bank of the Beas obviously in order to egg him on into the interior of the Gangetic plain. But, when Alexander could not carry out his suggestion due to the reluctance of his army, he must have thought of some other arrangement to give effect to it. Since Chāṇakya and Chandragupta were planning a campaign against the Nandas and were in search of some powerful helper and approached him for that purpose, he must have taken the opportunity by the forelock and thrown in his weight in the conquest of the empire of northern India in association with them. This course of events fits in the context of circumstances so well that it is difficult to doubt its probability.

As regards the name Parvata or Parvataka or Parvateśvara, we have to remember that the name of a country stands for the name of its ruler according to a rule of Sanskrit grammar (Pāṇini, IV, 1, 168). Pāṇini refers to a region called Parvata in a group of names beginning with Takṣaśilā (IV, 2, 143) and adverts to them in another rule, IV, 3, 93. The Chinese pilgrim Hsüan Chwang writes that travelling 700 li or so north-east of Multan, he reached Po-fa-to or Parvata. He describes it as follows :

"This country is 5,000 li or so in circuit, its capital is about 20 li. It is thickly populated and depends on the country of Cheka (Tse-Kia or Takka). A great deal of dry-ground rice is here grown. The soil is also fit for beans and

wheat. The climate is temperate, the disposition of the people honest and upright. They are naturally quick and hasty: their language is low and common. They are well-versed in composition and literature. There are heretics and believers in common. There are some ten *saṅghārāmas* with about 1,000 priests; they study both the Great and the Little Vehicle. There are four *stūpas* built by Aśoka-rāja. There are also some twenty Deva temples frequented by sectaries of different sorts.

By the side of the chief town is a great *saṅghārāma* with about 100 priests in it; they study the teaching of the Great Vehicle. It was here that Jinaputra, a master of śāstra, composed the *Yogāchārabhūmiśāstrakārikā;* here also Bhadraruci and Guṇaprabha, masters of śāstras, embraced the religious life. This great *saṅghārāma* has been destroyed by fire."

This account shows that some two hunderd miles north-east of Multan was the territory of Parvata in the Ṭakka country. It had a temperate climate and produced rice, beans and wheat and was thickly populated with upright people. From there the Chinese pilgrim moved south-west some 500 miles and reached the country bordering on the sea-shore of Sind.

The Ṭakka country, which included Parvata, was the name of the region to the north or north-east of Gujrat towards Kaśmīra in the tenth century, and this is exactly the position of the modern Ṭakkas in the hilly country on both banks of the Chenab within the territory of Jammu, but, as Cunningham has shown, at one time Ṭakkadeśa must have comprised a considerable part of the plains. Therefore, it is plausible to locate it somewhere in West Panjab in the region under the occupation of Poros. This view is reinforced by the fact that in the *Mahābhāruta* one of the variants of *Paurava* is *Parvatīya* or *Pārvateya.*

The collaboration of Poros or Parvataka and Chandragupta meant the canalisation of all the forces of the Panjab towards the conquest of Magadha. According to the *Mudrārākṣasa,* Chitravarman of Kulūta (Kulu Valley), Siṁhanāda of

Malaya (Mālavas), Puṣkarākṣa of Kaśmīra, Suṣeṇa of Sindhu (the Indus region), Meghanāda of Pārasīka (Persia) and the chief of Kṣatragaṇa (Khatris) with their respective contingents of troops joined the army of Parvataka or Parvateśvara. A large mleccha force led by Diṅgarāta, who can be identified with Eudamus, whom Alexander left in the Panjab with a Greek army, also figured in his retinue. Besides these units, a large army of Śakas (Scythians), Yavanas (Greeks), Kāmbojas (Aśvakas or Assakenoi), Kirātas (Mongoloid mountaineers), Pārasīkas (Persians), Bālhīkas (Bactrians), *etc.*, settled in the Panjab, also swelled his ranks. This multitudinous and multifarious army, led by Parvataka and Chandragupta and directed by Chāṇakya, besieged Pāṭaliputra like a surging flood and put an end to the rule of the Nandas. As said above, one of the conditions of the collaboration of Poros and Chandragupta was that the kingdom of the Nandas would be equally divided between them in the event of their victory. Thus Poros was dreaming of the empire not only of the Panjab but a part of the Gangetic Valley also, when the foul hand of an assassin put an end to his life and cleared the field for the unchallenged rule of Chandragupta Maurya.

XII

END OF POROS

We have seen that Chandragupta and Poros entered into a pact for the conquest of Magadha and, in pursuance of it, led an expedition against the Nandas and defeated them. An essential of the said pact was that, after the victory, the empire of the Nandas would be equally divided between Poros and Chandragupta. But Chāṇakya, the master mind of the movement, clearly realized that the saying, "two is company, three is none", does not apply to political affairs. Side by side, he was aware that Poros or Parvataka was even more important and powerful than Chandragupta and, therefore, could easily some day eclipse him. Hence, he felt that Poros or Parvataka could be done away with only through strategem and, accordingly, hatched a conspiracy for his assassination. If the *Mudrārākṣasa* is to be believed, he got Poros or Parvataka murdered through a poison-girl. We learn from Greek writers that, after the departure of Alexander from the Panjab, the Greek general Eudamos murdered Poros. By reconciling these two accounts we can say that Eudamos did it at the instance of Chāṇakya and Chandragupta. The aforesaid drama informs us that there was a mleccha contingent, commanded by one Diṅgarāta, in the army of Parvataka and Chandragupta. This Diṅgarāta can be easily identified with Eudamos. It appears that, when Poros and Chandragupta planned an expedition against Magadha, they also asked Eudamos and his Greek contingent to accompany them. But, somehow or other, the relations of Poros and Eudamos worsened or Chāṇakya succeeded in winning him over to the side of Chandragupta and, finding a suitable opportunity, tipped him to murder Poros. Thus, in the hour of glory and triumph, the eventful career of this heroic warrior and empire-builder was cut short through a foul conspiracy and Chandragupta became the unrivalled master of northern India.

The *Mudrārākṣasa* states that the son of Parvataka, named Malayaketu, also accompanied him to Magadha. On the murder of his father at the instance of Chāṇakya and Chandragupta, he broke away from them and joined the erstwhile minister of the Nandas, Rākṣasa. But Chāṇakya managed to bring about a rapprochement between Chandragupta and Rākṣasa with the result that Malayaketu was left in the lurch and eventually captured and presented before Chandragupta. But, through the intercession of Chāṇakya, Malayaketu was spared and his ancestral kingdom in the Panjab restored to him on condition that he retired home peacefully without creating any trouble regarding the division of the empire according to the contract made with his father.

After the said happenings, Malayaketu retired to the Panjab with his associates. He is the same as the Indian general Keteus mentioned by Diodoros. This name Keteus represents the latter part of the name of Malayaketu. Diodoros states that he joined Eumenes and fought on his side against Antigonos in the great battle of Gabiene in Iran in 316 B.C. From India, he and Eudamos arrived with their forces, for the help of Eumenes. It is well-known that Eudamos was a partisan of Eumenes and Peithon that of Antigonos. Both of them left India with their armies to take their sides. Since Eudomos was in close touch with Keteus or Malayaketu, he took him also with him to Iran to join Eumenes. But, in the battle of Gabiene, Keteus or Malayaketu was killed and his two wives offerred to burn themselves on his pyre. The matter was referred to Greek generals who decided in favour of the burning of the younger wife, as the elder one was with child.

After the departure of Malayaketu from India and his death in Iran, the family of Poros came to an end and his kingdom in the Panjab formed part of the Maurya empire. The feats of the Mauryas, Chandragupta and his successors, eclipsed those of Poros, and Indian writers threw them in the limbo of oblivion. Only a legend of Poros survived which a stray dramatist partially wove into his plot and some stray artist rendered into form and colour. Philostratos of Lemnos

states that outside the walls of Taxila was a temple of shell-marble round which were hung pictures on copper plates representing the feats of Alexander and Poros.

The above story of this great hero of the Panjab, instinct with herculean vigour and patriotic fervour, is a stirring episode of the history of this region.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This *History of Poros* is based on original sources. These sources can be divided under three heads: (1) Greek and Roman, (2) Iranian, Syriac and Ethiopian, and (3) Indian.

The history of Poros is intimately connected with that of Alexander the Great with whom he fought a memorable battle on the bank of the Jhelum. Hence those, who wrote about Alexander, like Ptolemy, son of Lagos, Aristoboulos of Potidaia, Nearchos of Amphipolis, Onesikritos of Astypalaia, Eumenes of Kardia, Chares of Mitylene, Kallisthenes of Olynthos and others, have also referred to Poros in their narratives. The original accounts of these contemporary authors are lost, but some histories, compiled on the basis of them, have come down to us. They are five in number : (1) The Anabasis of Alexander by Arrian of Nikomedeia, (2) The History of Alexander the Great by Quintus Curtius Rufus, (3) The Life of Alexander in Plutarch's Parallel Lives, (4) The History of Diodoros, the Sicilian, and (5) The Book of Macedonian History, compiled from the Universal History of Trogus Pompeius, by Justinus Frontinus. About these authors Prof. Freeman in his *Historical Essays* (2nd. Series, Third Edition, pp. 183-84) makes the following observation, "Diodoros we believe to be perfectly honest, but he is, at the same time, impenetrably stupid; Plutarch, as he himself tells us, does not write history, but lives, his object is rather to gather anecdotes, to point a moral, than to give a formal narrative of political and military events; Justin is a feeble and careless epitomizer; Quintus Curtius is, in our eyes, little better than a romance writer, he is the only one of the five whom we should suspect of any wilful departure from the truth." About Arrian alone he writes that "he seems to have had at once the will and the power to exercise a discreet judgment upon the statements of those who went before him." But, as Prof. Tarn has shown, he has also, in some cases, skilfully thrown the veil on the losses of Alexander in battles

(*Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. VI, p. 409). Critical study shows that on several points his statements are dubious. Nevertheless, broadly speaking, his account is quite comprehensive and deserves to be believed except when it is contradicted by other more authentic evidence. The accounts of these writers have been translated by J. W. M'crindle in *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great* (Archibald Constable and Company, Westminster).

Among the writers on the life and history of Alexander Kallisthenes is quite important. He was a relative and pupil of Aristotle and, on his recommendation, was permitted to accompany Alexander on his eastern expedition. But he was a man of free ideas and defiant nature and criticised Alexander on some points. This naturally irritated Alexander who ordered him to be imprisoned. Ptolemy says that he was tortured and crucified and Chares adds that he died in India. His account of Alexander's expedition must have been marked by some plain-speaking which his countrymen did not relish. However, it circulated freely, especially in the countries overrun by Alexander, and, about the third century, became the basis of a legendary version which goes by the name of *Pseudo-Kallisthenes*. A Greek version of it was translated into Pahlvi and this Pahlvi version was rendered into Syriac by Jacob of Sarug in 521 A.D. An Ethiopic version of the legend also exists. These versions have been translated by Ernst A. Wallis Budge in *The History of Alexander the Great being a series of translations of The Ethiopic Histories of Alexander*. A very good book on the Alexander legend is T. Nöldeke's *Beiträg zur Geschichte des Alexanderromans*. In it, the Arabic versions of the story, particularly those given by Tabari and Dinawari, are fully dealt with. These accounts are undoubtedly legendary and it is difficult to place implicit reliance on them. However, they can be used for checking other evidence and bringing into bold relief their strong and weak points.

Alexander must have made a profound impression on the people of Iran by putting an end to the glorious Achaemenian dynasty which played such a magnificent role in their national

evolution. Hence it is natural that they preserved the tradition of his expedition and thereby remembered the facts of it. By and large, they treated him with scorn and classed him with the devilish Zahhak and Afrasiab, but the Arabs had admiration for him, and, after the Arab conquest, they also changed their view of him. Ibn Muqaffa seems to have invented the story of the Persian ancestry of Alexander. This Arab-Persian account was adapted to his epic *Shāh-nāmā* by the famous Persian poet Firdausi. But Firdausi very carefully kept close to Pahlvi tradition, as his frequent remark *chunan guft goinda-i-Pahlvi* (thus the Pahlvi narrator has said) indicates. It is manifestly true that Firdausi is a late epic poet and it is incorrect to treat his work as sober history, but, as the carrier of old Iranian traditions, he can be drawn upon for knowing what the Iranians thought of Alexander. Again, the information, furnished by him, has to be subjected to a very critical scrutiny in the light of other evidence, and only that part of it can be followed which fits in with authentically established circumstances. *Shāh-nāmā's* edition by Turner Macan and its English translation by Arthur George Warner and Edmond Warner have been used in the present study.

India forgot everything about Alexander and also about his principal rival Poros. Only in some versions of the *Mahābhārata* some echoes of his exploits seem to survive under the name of Paurava, Pauruṣa and Pārvateya, though it is difficult to insist on this identification too much. The Critical Edition of the *Mahābhārata*, issued by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute o Poona, has been used in this study for hazarding the suggestion of the identification of Poros, Paurava, Pauruṣa, Pārvateya for what it is worth. Indian sources like the *Pariśiṣṭaparvan* of Hemachandra (ed. H. Jacobi), the *Chūrṇī* and *Ṭikā* of the *Āvaśyakaniryukti* (Jain Bandhu Printing Press, Indore), *Āvaśyakasūtravṛtti* (Āgamodaya Samiti, Bombay), Devendragaṇin's commentary *Sukhabodhā* on the *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra* (edited by Vijayomanga Sūri and published by the Nirṇaya Sāgara Press) are important from the Jaina point of view. From the Buddhist angle, the *Vaṁsatthappakāsinī*, a

commentary on the *Mahāvaṁsa* (ed. by G. P. Malalasekera and published by the Pali Text Society, London) and the *Mahāvaṁsa* of Moggallāna, called the *Cambodian Mahāvaṁsa* (ed. by G. P. Malalasekera and published by the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon-branch) are interesting. The Brahmanical version of the theme survives in the drama *Mudrārākṣasa* of Viśākhadatta (ed. by K. T. Telong and also by Hillebrandt). There is a strong probability that Parvata or Parvateśvara, mentioned in these texts, is the same as Paurava, Pauruṣa or Pārvateya of the *Mahābhārata* whose identification with Poros has been suggested above. These works enable us to reconstruct the later history of Poros. The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭilya (ed. R. Shamshastri) lays down the rules and methods of warfare which were in vogue in northern India in the fourth century B. C. and B. Bröler in *Alexanders Kampf gegen Poros; Ein Beiträg zur Indischen Geschichte* (Stuttgart, 1933) has shown that Poros adopted the military system and strategy given in this work.

Works, books and articles on Alexander from the pens of modern scholars are too numerous to be mentioned. But Prof. Tarn's *Alexander the Great* (2 Vols.), his article in the *Cambridge Ancient History* Vol. VI, V. A. Smith's *Early History of India* and E.R. Bevan's chapter in *Cambridge History of India* Vol. I deserve to be specially noted. Exhaustive references to these and many other works have been given in the present author's *Studies in Indian History and Civilization* (Shiva Lal Agrawala & Co., Agra 1962), pp. 20-69.

INDEX

Note: **There was not any index in the Indian edition. This index is made by Gautam**